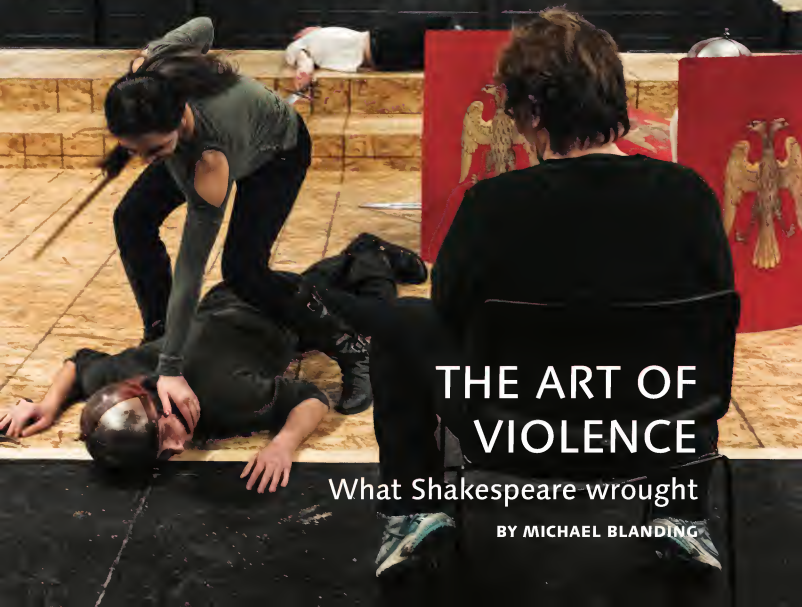


BOSTON COLLEGE

WINTER 2015

MAGAZINE



THE ART OF VIOLENCE

What Shakespeare wrought

BY MICHAEL BLANDING

PROLOGUE

HEARTS OF DARKNESS

Now frequently glossed as “Shakespeare’s greatest tragedy,” *King Lear* did not have an easy go of its first two centuries. Likely introduced to the stage in 1605, it is known to have been performed for King James during Christmas 1606, and then again, somewhere in the hinterlands, in 1610. The evidence of written considerations of the play (or the sparsity of them, really) is that it otherwise didn’t garner many performances or fans before it ran into the buzzsaw of the Puritan Revolution, which closed theaters from 1642 to 1660.

Lear took its heaviest blow when an edited version, titled *The History of King Lear*, premiered in 1681 in London and became an audience favorite, replacing Shakespeare’s original for 150 years, until ardent revivalists brought it back to the stage.

The revision’s author was Nahum Tate (1652–1715), a son of a Puritan clergyman and himself minor poet, who is adorned with a black curly wig the size of a yearling lamb in the portrait that has come down to us, and who had a thing about improving literature, once rewriting *Richard II* so as to remove all offense to “the dignity of [royal] courts.” Tate turned to *Lear* with equal fervor, not out of concern for royal sensitivities, however, but because he found the king’s actions in Act One inexplicable (Tate solved the motivation problem by tossing in an affair between Edgar and Cordelia that had put Lear in a bad mood), and because the characters seemed to gain no moral uplift from their trials. (They died, of course, which was the problem.)

This difficulty he fixed by constructing a new final act in which only the wicked die and all others survive and stand in a crowd at the play’s conclusion, hugging each other like members of an underdog high school basketball team that’s just won the district championship.

A mellow Lear, now restored to his throne, even expresses tenderness for his murderous and traitorous daughters (“Ingrateful as they were, my heart feels yet / A pang of nature for their wretched fall”) before he moves on to invite Edgar to marry Cordelia forthwith, which causes Cordelia to “blush to own myself o’er-paid for all my Sufferings.” (She may be sharing Dad’s benzodiazepines.) Meanwhile, Gloucester and Kent are feeling pretty tip-top because they’ve been invited to join their old pal Lear at court, where the three will reside in what seems to be a royal senior center, pursuing, Lear promises, “calm Reflections” while they “Enjoy the present Hour, nor fear the Last.” (And a daily dish of stewed prunes, one imagines,

and HBO.) And finally it’s left to Edgar to replace Albany’s bleak valedictory:

The oldest hath borne most: we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

With the following:

[Lear’s] bright example shall convince the World
(Whatever Storms of Fortune are decreed)
That Truth and Virtue shall at last succeed.

Exeunt, jiggling to Pharrell Williams’s “Happy.”

THAT’S NOT ALL OF IT, I’M AFRAID. NO LESS AN eminence and great heart than Dr. Johnson found the death of Cordelia so disturbing that he could not bring himself to re-read Shakespeare’s text until forced to do so when, in late middle age, he edited the plays for publication. Charles Lamb claimed that he never saw *Lear* on stage without finding the sight of the deranged king “painful and disgusting.” He considered the part “impossible to be represented on a stage.” (He’s not alone in this.) Other highly regarded critics have noted that the play is weighed down with too many characters who have things to say, and that the offstage battle in the last act seems a mere convenience and pallid alongside the tangy war scenes in the history plays.

Others complain about the drama’s bloodiness: eight dead (not including serving men), and the unwatchable and even unreadable gouging of Gloucester’s eyes. But *Hamlet* kills as many, and no complaints. And as Dr. Johnson sagely noted re the eye gouging (which he found objectionable), it wouldn’t be there if Shakespeare’s audience hadn’t been hungry for it.

I’ve no quarrel with a good deal of the critique. But *Lear* is not a play, in my view. It’s a fever dream—Shakespeare, as Hazlitt wrote, out of control for once, “fairly caught in the web of his own imagination.” Powered by its own physics, spinning in its own shadowed universe, *Lear* stands in relation to the rest of the corpus as Job stands in relation to the rest of the Bible—a remonstrance, a caution, a chilling and unforgettable warning. When Edgar assures his father “Thy life’s a miracle,” he isn’t inscribing a Hallmark card; he’s reminding a suffering, dying, regretful man that the choice offered us is life with hazards or nothing, and one of those is wondrous.

Our story on Monan Professor Tina Packer’s course “Shakespeare Acting” begins on page 26.

—BEN BIRNBAUM

Contents

BOSTON COLLEGE MAGAZINE

VOL. 75 NO. 1 WINTER 2015



From "Being There," pg. 16

FEATURES

16 BEING THERE

Fifty years ago, 17 Boston College students traveled 1,300 miles to join the civil rights protests taking place in Selma, Alabama. It was a pivotal moment in their lives and in the history of student political engagement at Boston College

By Zachary Jason '11

26 DRAMATIC STRESS

As part of the Shakespeare Anthology Project—the brainchild of noted actress, director, scholar, and impresario Tina Packer—students learned to wound and be wounded, with words and with swords drawn. And to consider why

By Michael Blanding

34 LAST RITES

A summer day in Rooibok

By Maggie Messitt '01

ON THE COVER: Monan Professor Tina Packer looks on as Julianne Quas '15 and Dustin Pazar '15 rehearse a scene from *Carotolanus*.

Photograph by Lee Pellegrini

2 Letters

4 Linden Lane

Female students in Saudi Arabia and at Boston College connect • Boston College's latest Pulitzer Prize-winner returns • The subject was race • Research across the departments • Pygmalion • Alumni veterans reflect on the war in Vietnam

40 C21 Notes

In Latin American faith tradition, the vanquished stay strong • Media vs. orthodoxy vs. progressives vs. politicians vs. indifference

44 End Notes

The politics behind unleaded gas • A natural and cultural history • Dent-de-lion

50 Class Notes

80 Inquiring Minds

A sociologist studies women with the cancer gene

81 Works & Days

Charity fight promoter Julie Kelly '01



GET THE FULL STORY, AT BCM ONLINE:

bc.edu/bcm

VIEW THE VIDEOS: "Race in the U.S.A.," a faculty and student discussion (pg. 10) • Faculty research presentations on issues of public health (pg. 12) • The alumni veterans' discussion "Experiencing Vietnam" (pg. 14) • "Battle Plans," instruction and rehearsal in the "Theater Skills: Stage Combat" class (pg. 26) • Talk on "Public Health and the University," by Dr. Philip J. Landrigan '63 (pg. 45)

- READER'S LIST: Books by alumni, faculty, and staff
- HEADLINERS: Alumni in the news

EDITOR

Ben Birnbaum

DEPUTY EDITOR

Anna Marie Murphy

SENIOR EDITOR

Thomas Cooper

INTERIM ART DIRECTOR

Keith Ake

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Gary Wayne Gilbert

SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Lee Pellegrini

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Zachary Jason '11

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

William Bole

BCM ONLINE PRODUCERS

Ravi Jain, Miles Benson

SUPPLEMENTS EDITOR

Maureen Dezell

INTERNS

Samantha Costanzo '15, Alexandra Rae Hunt '17,

Andrew Skaras '15

Readers, please send address changes to:

Development Information Services

Cadigan Alumni Center, 140 Commonwealth Ave.

Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

(617) 552-3440, Fax: (617) 552-0077

bc.edu/bcm/address/

Please send editorial correspondence to:

Boston College Magazine

140 Commonwealth Ave.

Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

bcm@bc.edu

Boston College Magazine

is published quarterly (Winter, Spring, Summer,

Fall) by Boston College, with editorial offices at the

Office of Marketing Communications,

(617) 552-4820, Fax: (617) 552-2441

ISSN 0885-2049

Periodicals postage paid at Boston, MA, and

additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address corrections to

Boston College Magazine

Development Information Services

Cadigan Alumni Center, 140 Commonwealth Ave.

Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

Copyright 2015 Trustees of Boston College.

Printed in U.S.A. All publications rights reserved.

BCM is distributed free of charge to alumni, faculty,

staff, donors, and parents of undergraduate stu-

dents. It is also available by paid subscription at the

rate of \$20 for one year (four issues). Please send

check or money order, payable to *Boston College*

Magazine, to:

Subscriptions, *Boston College Magazine*

140 Commonwealth Ave., Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

Please direct Class Notes queries to

Class Notes editor

Cadigan Alumni Center

140 Commonwealth Ave.

Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

email: classnotes@bc.edu

phone: (617) 552-4700

LETTERS

A FAN'S NOTES

Re "American Life," by Lev Golinkin '03 (Fall 2014): In the fall of 1999, the entire first floor of Fitzpatrick Hall was watching the Red Sox play the Cleveland Indians in the American League Division Series. During one of the games, a hall-mate with an odd "New Jersey" accent wandered in and started asking questions. In the following days, months, and years, I was to describe the intricacies of baseball to Lev Golinkin—what a base on balls is, how the infield fly rule works, why it is morally wrong to root for the Yankees, why Sox fans talk so weird (or "wee-yahd").

Over our four years at Boston College, I got to know Lev really well. He was always quick-witted, really funny, and a great friend (and, for some reason, able to recite *Simpsons* quotes on demand). It took reading his memoir for me to understand his experience as a refugee. Though I am certain that he still does not understand the infield fly rule, Lev deserves praise for the clarity and bravery with which he recounts and recaptures his roots.

Christopher DePesa '03, MS'05

Reading, Massachusetts

MAJOR VALUE

Re "Major Addition," by William Bole (Summer 2014): As a former student in the environmental studies minor program now working in the corporate sustainability field, I was thrilled to learn of the new environmental studies major. The management of environmental issues across industries and professions is critical, and an interdisciplinary program like this can help equip students with a dynamic understanding of these issues.

Elizabeth Barthelme '11

New York, New York

THE RED BANDANA

Re "True Colors," by Zachary Jason (Fall 2014): Our family has been deeply honored by the commitment of the Boston College community, which has kept Welles's memory alive for so many, most

of whom never knew him. The enthusiasm of students and others who rise early on a Saturday to volunteer or participate in the 5K run is truly heartwarming.

Welles loved his years at Boston College. As we were packing his things after graduation, he told us that he wished college was seven years, not four. Because of the Red Bandana Run, the Red Bandana football game, and the passion of so many at Boston College to carry on Welles's memory and spirit, it looks like he will be at Boston College forever.

Alison and Jefferson Crowther, P'99, '01

Nyack, New York

FOOTNOTES

"Remember," by Ben Birnbaum (Fall 2014), references a point made in the newly published *The Heights: An Illustrated History of Boston College, 1863–2013*, by Mr. Birnbaum and Seth Meehan, Ph.D.'14, which states on page 113: "At the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans, on New Year's Day 1941, the Eagles beat Tennessee, 19–13, earning themselves a postseason fifth-place ranking by the Associated Press. (It's sometimes said that they were the national champions, but that's untrue.)"

The AP poll referenced was taken at the end of the regular season. It was not a postseason poll. Not until 1965 did the AP take its final poll after the bowl season; and only since 1968 has the AP always waited until after the bowl games to conduct its final poll. In 1940, the final Associated Press poll was published on December 2, 1940, almost a month before the major bowl games were played. The statement "earning themselves a postseason fifth-place ranking by the Associated Press" is thus in error.

Three football teams can make a case for the national championship in 1940 (the NCAA took no part in selecting national champions in football):

- Minnesota (8–0) was ranked first in the AP (regular season) final poll. It did not play in a bowl game.

• Stanford (10-0) beat seventh-ranked Nebraska (8-2) in the Rose Bowl.

• Boston College (11-0) beat SEC champion Tennessee (which had not lost a regular season game in three years) 19-13, as noted, in the Sugar Bowl.

Our University has openly, notoriously, and continuously (not "sometimes") asserted its claim to the 1940 season. Minnesota and Stanford also have viable claims to share in the championship; and you would find in university archives all three schools were named national champions by various media outlets.

Erasing the national championship of the 1940 football team in Boston College's *Illustrated History* is an extraordinary action. It erases the pinnacle athletic achievement in the 150-year history of our University.

David Twomey '62, JD'68
Boston College

The writer is a professor of business law at the Carroll School of Management.

Ben Birnbaum and Seth Meehan reply: We thank Professor Twomey for the date correction and the opportunity to re-delve the wonderful rabbit hole of college football championships.

We hope we don't take all the fun out of the adventure by first establishing that 1940's national champion was Minnesota, named not only by the Associated Press (then the leading—if not official—arbiter of these rankings), but by nine other syndicated analysts from across the country. Two analysts—they were by tradition referred to as "selectors"—named Stanford, and two others Tennessee. The Eagles' season was glorious and captivated the city of Boston for many reasons noted in a story in this magazine on the 50th anniversary of the Sugar Bowl game and in our recent illustrated University history. But the fact is that none of the recognized selectors endorsed Boston College as national champions, and the AP placed it fifth in the nation (behind Michigan as well as the teams listed above).

Why did Boston College (at 10-0) not receive a better ranking? The most likely reason is that while four of its wins were wondrous, five were blowouts against weaker teams (e.g., 40-0 vs. the Praying Colonels of Centre College). A close call against another

underdog, Holy Cross (score, 7-0), in the season's last game almost certainly contributed to the drop from fourth to fifth position in the final AP poll.

As Professor Twomey says, Boston College still claimed a national championship, factoring in the Sugar Bowl, of course. In the absence of an NCAA-sanctioned champion or Associated Press post-bowl appraisal, this University was hardly alone in rendering justice on its own terms. (Some distinguished schools are renown for their slates of "championships.")

That all the evidence points to our championship having been self-applied takes nothing away from the achievements of the young men who played and their coach Frank Leahy. In fact, it adds an admirably brassy note to the story of a small college that was bootstrapping its rocky way to becoming a distinguished national university.

CROWDSOURCING

Re "Remember," by Ben Birnbaum (Fall 2014): After looking at the photograph from 1977 of four black women standing outside the Dustbowl (I am just behind them, wearing glasses), I tried to remember what was going on at the time. I spoke with Donald Garnett, the photographer, and he shared his recollection that there may have been a streaking event taking place. At the same time it could have been a more serious activity—this was the era of school desegregation in Boston. Whatever the particulars, it is significant that this event brought black and white students together.

Willie Elder '76
New Haven, Connecticut

IN TALKS

Re: "Conversation Starters," by William Bole (Summer 2014): I met Dean Chebatov in 1991, when I was interviewed for the Student Judicial Board by him and SJB members. I subsequently served four years on the SJB. Over time, Dean Chebatov became Paul, and my friend. To read that he and his wife, Mer Zovko, shared their relationship in conversation with students made perfect sense. Both talked to students at a level more personal than professional.

Roshan N. Rajkumar '95
Saint Louis Park, Minnesota

FRIENDSHIP

Re William B. Neenan, SJ: 1929-2014" (Summer 2014): Every so often during my first year I felt overwhelmed trying to balance my courses, the marching band, and my scholarship commitment to Navy ROTC. One evening I was waiting at Walsh for the shuttle back to the Newton campus when Fr. Neenan sat down next to me and started a conversation with his trademark "Hello, friend." He rode the bus with me to College Road, where he got off, while I continued my ride home. That simple act gave me the confidence to make it through that hectic year.

Jeffrey Pelletier '94
Columbus, Ohio

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

The Summer 2014 issue's dignified tribute to the person I remember from a distance as Dean Neenan was exceptional. Beyond that, the Assigned Reading on medical literature by Professor Boesky was excellent, as was Franz Wright's translation of Rainer Maria Rilke and the valuable, if not essentially nostalgic, article by Paul Elie. I also enjoyed familiarizing myself with the art of Wilfredo Lam.

And I will keep in my heart the memory of one Casper Ferguson '37. Would that we could all do this for the Missouri town of the same name.

Susan M. Rochette, MA '82
Purlear, North Carolina

BCM welcomes letters from readers.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and must be signed to be published. Our fax number is (617) 552-2441; our email address is bcm@bc.edu.

GET CONNECTED —

**BOSTON
COLLEGE
MAGAZINE**

— ON FACEBOOK



FOR SPECIAL CONTENT AND
MULTIMEDIA UPDATES FROM
@BC AND FRONT ROW.

Lipden Lane

CONTENTS

6 Foreign correspondence

Female students in Saudi Arabia and at Boston College connect

8 Scoop

Boston College's latest Pulitzer Prize-winner returns

10 Open meeting

The subject was race

12 Partners in health

Research across the departments

13 Close-up

Pygmalion

14 Soldiers once

Alumni veterans reflect on the war in Vietnam

CAMPUS DIGEST

An 8:00 A.M. Mass in St. Mary's Chapel on December 8 marked the end (but for the inevitable punch list) of a two-year renovation of 98-year-old **St. Mary's Hall** and the return of 28 members of the Boston College Jesuit community to refurbished residences on the building's second, third, and fourth floors. Shortly thereafter, the Woods College of Advancing Studies and the departments of communication and computer science moved into their new quarters in the building's south wing. ✂ With 1,086 students enrolled, economics set a University record for the **number of majors**. Biology followed with 865, and the mathematics department reported that, since 2000, the number of its majors has increased by 120 percent—to 298—including the addition of 72 this past fall. ✂ Work began at 2101 Commonwealth Avenue on the Brighton Campus, former residence of Boston's Cardinal Archbishop, to create a new venue for the McMullen Museum of Art. The renovations, which will nearly double the current **exhibition space**, are scheduled for completion in 2016. ✂ Andy Hargreaves, the Brennan Professor of Education at the Lynch School of Education, received the 2015 Grawemeyer Award in Education. The \$100,000 award, which Hargreaves will share with collaborator Michael Fullan, former dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, recognized their book *Professional Capital:*

Transforming Teaching in Every School (2012). Hargreaves was also acknowledged, along with the Lynch School's Cawthorne Professor Marilyn Cochran-Smith, in an *Education Week* **ranking of U.S. scholars** who are "contributing most substantially to public debates about education." ✂ Six members of the newly installed 114th **U.S. Congress** are Boston College alumni, while a team of six undergraduates placed third (out of 19) in the regional round of the College Fed Challenge, in which schools present monetary policies for hypothetical implementation by the Federal Reserve Bank to a panel of judges. ✂ As part of ongoing renewal of the University's core curriculum, **15 new freshman classes**—among them "Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity," "Reading the Body," and "Truth-telling in History"—have been approved for introduction in the fall 2015 semester. ✂ Boston College Trustee Karen Izzi Bristing '84 and her husband Steve Bristing have endowed the head coach's position for men's basketball—the **Clement and Elizabeth Izzi Family Head Men's Basketball Coach**. The position, currently held by Jim Christian, is the third coaching spot to be endowed. ✂ Returning to its original, 1936 moniker, the Graduate School of Social Work changed its title to the **Boston College School of Social Work**. ✂ The Carroll School of Management announced the creation of the Corcoran Center for



SALUTATIONS—A 90th birthday celebration for Chancellor and former University President (1972–96) J. Donald Monan, SJ (seated center), was held on December 17 in the Cadigan Alumni Center. Among the University Trustees present were, in foreground from left, Drake G. Behrakis '86; John M. Connors Jr. '63, H'07; and Kathleen M. McGillycuddy NC'71 (standing, right). Seated at right is University President William P. Leahy, SJ.

Real Estate and Urban Action. Named in honor of real estate developer and longtime benefactor **Joseph Corcoran '59, H'09**, the center will provide a forum for the study and promotion of mixed-income neighborhoods. ✂ The Connell School of Nursing was named a National Hartford Center of **Gerontological Nursing Excellence**, recognizing CSON's research, education, and practice in the field. ✂ Having led the Eagles to 14 wins in the two years since his arrival in 2013, football coach **Steve Addazio's contract** was extended through the 2020 season. ✂ A winter storm named Juno dropped more than **two feet of snow** on campus, canceling classes for two days. ✂ *Our Sunday Visitor*, the largest U.S. Catholic newspaper, named Hossfman Ospino, assistant professor of Hispanic ministry and religious education and author of the

2014 report *Hispanic Ministry in Catholic Parishes*, one of the **"Catholics of 2014."** And professor Juliet Schor topped an About.com list of "5 superstar women sociologists you should know." The announcement described Schor as the "foremost scholar of the sociology of consumption." ✂ **A \$7.53 million gift** from the Phyllis and Jerome Lyle Rappaport Foundation will establish The Rappaport Center for Law and Public Policy at Boston College and create the Jerome Lyle Rappaport Visiting Professorship in Law and Public Policy. ✂ Hoping to clarify the world of carbon atoms for fellow organic chemistry students, five undergraduates have created a website, **Orgo Made Simple**. Digest notes that simple is a relative term. ✂ The Franciscan Hospital for Children, Horace Mann School for the Deaf, Jewish Community

Housing for the Elderly, and West End Boys and Girls Club were among a dozen **Allston-Brighton groups** receiving a total of more than \$33,000 in grants from the University's Allston-Brighton/Boston College Community Fund. ✂ During October and November 1,331 faculty and staff members walked or ran 207,768 miles while participating in the University's wellness campaign, **"Walk Across Campus."** The winning team, a 10-person juggernaut from the Connell School of Nursing named CSON Insane, traveled an average of 8.94 miles daily for the period. Top individual honors went to Conte Force team member Stephanie Coleman, who in her non-ambulatory hours is business manager in the student affairs business service center; she kept a 21.34 miles-per-day pace for the two-month period.
—Thomas Cooper



Emily Murphy '17 (foreground) and classmates during their first conversation with Saudi women.

Foreign correspondence

By Jeri Zeder

Female students in Saudi Arabia and at Boston College connect

Last summer, Kathleen Bailey '76, an associate professor of the practice in the political science department, received an email from two Boston College colleagues with academic connections in Saudi Arabia. The email asked whether Bailey would be interested in video-conferencing with a female professor at Taibah University, a public institution in Medina that educates women on a separate campus from its men.

Bailey was intrigued. She had traveled to Saudi Arabia in 2008 and 2014, and had seen the rigid strictures on women starting ever so slightly to loosen.

She began communicating with Taibah University's Abeer Alsarrani, an assistant professor of English. At first, Bailey says, their notion was to bring students together via video-conferencing for

"a couple of conversations, as an extracurricular activity." "But the more I thought about the subjects that we might discuss, the resources we might delve into—cultural and academic—and the changes and progress on women's issues that I had seen while in Saudi Arabia, the more I was convinced that an entire course should be built around the conferencing," she says.

The result was a seminar: "Inside the Kingdom: Conversations with Saudi Women." This one-credit, pass/fail pilot course was unusual not only because it featured three conferencing sessions between students at Taibah University and Boston College, but also because it was for women only, out of deference to the Saudi culture's strict segregation by gender. Fourteen women were enrolled in Bailey's course. Taibah University

treated it as a voluntary opportunity for undergraduate women studying medicine and pharmacology.

Bailey spent the summer putting together a syllabus for her own students, which included resources recommended by Alsarrani. In addition to scholarly and topical readings, she chose biographies, novels, and films. "I wanted to incorporate documentaries and visuals because it's hard for anybody who has never been to Saudi Arabia to picture what it's like to be a woman under these circumstances," Bailey says. Those circumstances include the common practice of polygamy; child marriages; a ban on women drivers; and the guardianship system by which a woman needs the permission of her male guardian to marry, open a bank account, travel outside the country, or undergo elective surgery. For these reasons and more, Human Rights Watch and other organizations generally rate Saudi Arabia low in comparative human rights rankings. The World Economic Forum's 2013 Global Gender Gap Report, for example, placed Saudi Arabia 127th out of 136 countries for gender equality.

Bailey initially intended to spend the early weeks of the course considering the impact of patriarchy, Sharia law, and gender politics on the lives of Saudi women. But then she changed her mind. "I realized that in order to talk to the Saudi women, we first needed to talk about ourselves," Bailey says. She wanted the video conferences to be productive. "It wasn't, let's beat up on Saudi women because they can't drive, but rather, well, let's look to see what Saudi women can do and can't do, what opportunities they have, what opportunities they're denied, what rights they might want to have and what rights we have that they don't find particularly attractive. And in order to do that, you have to be self-reflective," Bailey says.

So Bailey and her students explored the so-called confidence gap between men and women in the United States, including findings by Boston College's Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment that women students at the Heights rate themselves less positively on factors such as academic confidence upon graduating than they did coming in



The video feed from Taibah University.

as freshmen. The exploration led to many class discussions. "My women students really wanted to talk about what was bugging them, that they never had a forum in which to speak about their own concerns and worries and problems and their dreams, and the way in which they think things should be different or could be improved," Bailey says.

Shifting to the conditions in Saudi Arabia, Bailey's students consulted a number of resources, including the scathing critique of the status of women in the Middle East "Why Do They Hate Us?" by journalist Mona Eltahawy, published in 2012 in the journal *Foreign Policy*; Jean Sasson's book *Princess: A True Story of Life Behind the Veil in Saudi Arabia* (1992), a disturbing as-told-to account of a woman in the Saudi royal family; *The Girls of Riyadh*, Rajaa Alsanea's 2007 novel (banned in the Kingdom) about the escapades of four young Saudi women; and *Wajida* (2013), the first feature film ever directed by a Saudi woman, Haifaa al-Mansour, about a girl on the cusp of adolescence who longs, against social mores, to own a bicycle.

The first video conference took place on October 20 at 9:00 A.M. EST—near the start of Boston College's school day and the end of Taibah University's. On screen, three young Saudi women in their early

twenties, dressed in hijabs and abayas, sat at a table graced with a traditional Arabian coffee pot. They smiled at the camera. Bailey's students, in leggings and jeans, sat conference-style in a horseshoe around a table in a small classroom in McGuinn Hall, with paper cups of coffee from a Dunkin' Donuts Box o' Joe. The president of Taibah University—a man, so his voice was piped in—greeted the Boston College students: "We are very excited about this experiment," he said. "We wish you all the best!" He said his goodbyes, and signed off.

Spontaneously, the Boston College students and the Taibah students waved to one another. During introductions, the Taibah students indicated in perfect English that they were undergraduates studying medicine and that each had experienced living or traveling in the United States or Europe. One was married with a young child.

What do you think are the biggest issues Saudi women face today? came the question from the Boston College side. Answer: Driving. We will be able to drive soon—maybe in five years.

Q: What do you think of the guardianship system?

A: It keeps us safe. When I go to a restaurant, I don't have to wait in a queue. My brother can go get a table. If you want to

get married, if your dad says no, you can have permission from the government.

Q: A lot of women here struggle with confidence academically. . . .

A: Our confidence is fine. We are confident we can make our dreams come true. If you are doing your best, you can do anything.

Q: What do you do in your spare time?

A: Movies!

Q: But movies are banned.

A: But there's Netflix!

Laughter.

THE ENCOUNTER, WHICH LASTED AN hour, was notable for its human touches, but Bailey's students later said they felt that the Taibah students were holding back. "It's hard for people, especially in conservative societies, to really talk poorly about their own culture or about their own government to foreigners," said Isra Hussain '17, one of Bailey's students. Yet Hussain, a Muslim-American who has traveled in Saudi Arabia, found the exchange hopeful. "A lot of times you're watching the news and it kind of seems that the Middle East is doomed," she said. "But you look at these girls in Saudi Arabia and they have so much hope for their own rights. If rights for females in a country like Saudi Arabia could be improving, that means the country is paying more attention to human rights overall."

A new group of Taibah students attended the second video conference on November 3. The Boston College students were surprised to hear these women staunchly defend the practice of polygamy. The Saudi women compared it favorably to monogamous marriage, in which they claimed men cheat on a regular basis. A Boston College student asked, what about a woman having more than one husband? The thought struck the Taibah students as ridiculous. How would you know who a child's father is?

The third conference involved yet another set of Saudi students. This group was willing to share their awareness of women's activism in Saudi Arabia, and their expectations that change would come more quickly than some of their classmates seemed to believe, or to desire.

"I think what we learned is that of

course not all Saudi girls are the same," Hussain said.

Serendipitously, in the middle of the semester, Bailey discovered that Fawziah Albakr, a professor in the women's section of the education department at King Saud University in Riyadh, was at Boston College, as a visiting scholar at the Center for International Higher Education. An activist who has studied opportunities for women in the Saudi labor market, Albakr was one of the 47 protestors who in 1990 staged a driving demonstration in Riyadh—a stunt that cost each of them dearly. Albakr spent time in jail, lost her job and her passport, was publicly denounced, and subjected to death threats. Bailey invited Albakr to speak to her class.

Albakr shared her perspective that the question for Saudi women is not one of feminism, however it is defined, but of human rights. For Kyla Longman '15, that was an important lesson. Albakr, she said later, thinks of women as "achieving liberation in the same vein as minorities and expats who tend to have a poor situation in the country. I really liked

seeing the connection between those struggles, which I hadn't really seen before," she said.

According to Dana Hadra '15, the course helped her to see the particular situation of Saudi women in a more universal context. "A lot of the problems we face as women in the United States are very similar to the problems that women in Saudi Arabia face, whether it's objectification of women in the media or everything from issues concerning dating to marriage and family," she said.

Looking to next year, Bailey would like to create a three-credit course and require students to write research papers. To the partnership with Taibah University, she'd like to add a private university in a more liberal city, such as Jeddah, for added perspective. Word of the fall semester conversation project "has gotten out," she says, "and I've had offers from four or five different universities in Saudi Arabia, from Riyadh and other places, to do exactly the same thing." ■

Jeri Zeder is a writer in the Boston area.

Scoop

By Zachary Jason

Boston College's latest Pulitzer Prize-winner returns

On the late afternoon of October 27, Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Will Hobson '06 came to Boston College for an informal Q&A with undergraduates. Twenty students, most of them editors and writers for campus news publications the *Heights* and the *Gavel*, sat with notepads ready around a conference table in the brick Tudor revival that houses the Institute for Liberal Arts, which sponsored his visit.

English professor Carlo Rotella, who taught Hobson in his "Magazine Writing" course a decade ago and oversees the University's concentration in journalism,

asked the first question: "How did you develop radar for a good story?"

Hobson recounted the early advice of one of his editors at the *Tampa Bay Times*, to "pretend I'm telling the story to my friend at a bar." If it wouldn't interest his friend, Hobson says, "I'm probably not going to do a story about it. I look for stories that engender outrage."

In 2014, Hobson was awarded the Pulitzer in local reporting for a seven-part investigative series he delivered with fellow *Tampa Bay Times* reporter Michael LaForgia, in which they exposed the failings of the local government housing

program for the homeless. Following a tip to the paper from a caller in the summer of 2013, Hobson spent five months interviewing dozens of homeless people and digging through 20 years of Hillsborough County payment records to discover that local officials had been paying out public funds in the form of rent vouchers to landlords whose properties were structurally unsafe and dangerously unhealthy. The reporters cited in particular Tampa Port Authority chairman William "Hoe" Brown, whose squalid, roach-infested, crime-laden trailer park and extended-stay motel, they wrote, had garnered \$600,000 from the county's Homeless Recovery agency over 15 years. Within a couple months of the first story, the trailers were shut down, and the motel was brought up to code; Brown quit his public office, and three county managers either resigned or were fired.

Rotella put a follow-up question: "Boston College has a remarkably polite campus culture. How did you develop that marketable skill of pissing people off?"

"You need to take on the attitude that... I'm a taxpayer," said Hobson, who wore a gray blazer and jeans and resembles a slightly more rugged, 30-year-old Matt Damon. Reporters, he said, should feel authorized to approach government employees and say, "Explain to me what you do."

A female student interjected: "But how do you become a go-to person for great tips?"

In 2008, said Hobson, he was a week into his first full-time job as a county government reporter—at the *Panama City News-Herald* (circulation: 20,000)—when the "longtime courts reporter there, the silverback gorilla of the newsroom, told me, it takes a year until you can do really good work." At 22, Hobson recalled, his first reaction was dismissive—"but he was right." Hobson said that it has taken him about a year to gain the confidence of any community he's worked in.

Asked about his career path, Hobson noted that as an undergraduate English major he wrote op-eds for the *Heights* (he claims they were "really, really bad—I battled for years to do work that would push them down my Google search results"). After freelancing at the



Hobson (left), with Katie McGinney '18, an editorial assistant at the *Gavel*.

Philadelphia Inquirer for two years following graduation, he called "somewhere north of 200 newspapers" before landing in Panama City; a year and a half later, he moved to cover local government for the *Daytona Beach News-Journal* (circulation: 64,000). He joined the *Tampa Bay Times* (circulation: 240,000) in 2011. "For a few years," he said, he needed to "make mistakes that were only read by 10,000 people as opposed to 300,000 people, and get better."

Hobson thanked faculty members in the room for preparing him as a writer: Jon Marcus, a journalism lecturer who is an editor for the *Hechinger Report* and the former editor of *Boston Magazine*; and associate professor of English Robert Chibka, a novelist ("he was great at revealing to me that your first draft is not going to be very good").

But Hobson spent most of the hour fielding concerns raised by students about the future of journalism.

Daniel Lee '18, an editorial assistant at the six-year-old monthly *Gavel*, asked, "How do you get past all the disillusionment" of working in a shrinking newspaper industry?

"You will always be disillusioned. That's the important first step." After the nervous laughter settled, Hobson continued, "Accept that it's not a 40-hour-

a-week job. I've always tried to keep my bosses at my beat happy, and then looked for more ambitious stories that bosses at bigger papers might think, 'I want to hire that guy.'"

Heights features editor (and BCM intern) Samantha Costanzo '15 commented that, in the digital age, "It seems like you need to be a photographer, a

videographer, an editor, and you have to know how to code. How many multimedia skills do you really need?"

"It's good to try out all those, because you may be really awesome at one of them," Hobson replied. "But if you want to be a journalist, the essential tools are reporting and storytelling."

AFTER THE SESSION, TWO EDITORS from the *Heights* and two from the *Gavel* continued the Q&A with Hobson (and his wife, Alex Hobson, a reporter with ABC's Tampa affiliate, WFTS), over dinner in Newton Centre. How many drafts do your articles go through? For the first story in the housing series, 25. Notepad or tape recorder? Notepad, "But I'll record if I think the person I'm interviewing might sue me." Who conducts better interviews? "Him, by default," Alex Hobson said, noting that the camera and hot lights often distract television subjects.

Hobson told the students that younger writers help keep him motivated. "It's a great time to be where you guys are sitting. Money's tight, and papers are hiring younger and less experienced staffs" he said. "Interns are coming to my paper every day and writing front-page stories on big breaking news, and that never used to happen." ■

Lochhead named executive vice president

On November 19, the University announced the selection of Michael J. Lochhead '93, MBA'99, as executive vice president. Due to take up his office in Botoolph House on February 9, he will oversee the divisions of Facilities Management, Finance and Treasury, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Student Affairs, as well as the offices of Emergency Management, Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment, and Space Planning.

Lochhead has spent 14 years working in the field of Jesuit higher education, most recently at the College of the Holy Cross, where he became vice president for finance and administration in 2004. He previously served at the University of San Francisco as assistant vice president for business and finance and as a manager in the higher education consulting practice at Arthur Andersen L.L.P. Lochhead succeeds Patrick J. Keating, who is retiring after nearly 14 years in the post.





Pruitt: "Step out of your comfort zone."

Open meeting

By Dave Denison

The subject was race

The police killings last year of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York, shook the nation. And on many campuses, including Boston College, students and faculty are encouraging not just reflection but action.

About 60 Boston College students conducted a "die-in" on December 9 at St. Mary's Hall, in sympathy with national "Black Lives Matter" protests. Later that month, more than 200 faculty members signed a letter of support for the students, after some had received letters from the administration noting that the demonstration lacked a permit and warning of "possible disciplinary outcomes."

As student activists questioned whether Boston College approved of reflection but not protest, winter break intervened to quiet the campus.

Yet the depth of campus feeling about racial justice was evident on January 21, when students packed into Fulton 511 for

a panel discussion on "Race in the U.S.A.: Expectations, Concerns, and Hopes in 2015." It was standing-room-only in the 198-seat lecture hall, with dozens more watching a video feed in an overflow room.

The panel featured five faculty members and was moderated by James Keenan, SJ, director of the Jesuit Institute. The Office of the Provost and Dean of Faculties cosponsored the event with the Jesuit Institute.

In the panelists' discussion and in the student response afterward, the emphasis alternated between the need for collective action against racism and the need for individual change.

Gustavo Morello, an assistant professor of sociology, framed the question by asserting that race is a social construction. "Race is not about biology but about power relations," he said.

Nancy Pineda-Madrid, an associate professor of theology, responded, "Race

is about power, no doubt. But it's also about imagination." She said the events in Ferguson and Staten Island are a kind of "cultural collision," where a lack of understanding has a tragic end.

Vincent Rougeau, dean of the Law School, and Martin Summers, professor of history, connected current protests to the civil rights movement of the 1960s, as did Min Song, director of the Asian American studies program. "If we want change it doesn't happen on the individual level it happens on the structural level," Song said, "and how structural change happens is through collective action."

Students took up the question of collective action, with several mentioning the December protest and the perceived negative reaction from University leadership. "I feel like there are a bunch of conflicting messages," said Kwesi Aaron '16. "I say that the students are very active and involved," he said. "But at the end of the day if I don't get some sort of reciprocity, some sort of acknowledgement that my life matters, that black lives matter, I feel like a fool. I march around campus with my friends and we feel like, what are we doing this for? Do they hear us?"

Students spoke in personal terms as they took up the concern of what kind of actions make a difference. "As everything was happening in Ferguson and Staten Island," said Ashlie Pruitt '15, "there were days when I didn't want to get out of bed, because I was so hurt and discouraged." Though talking about race isn't always easy, she said, white students especially need to "step out of your comfort zone," and "even ask a person of color on this campus what their experience is like."

Mary Yuengert '16 said that white people who haven't experienced racism directly often wonder, "How do we be good allies?"

"I want to respond to that by saying educating yourself and empathizing as much as you possibly can is the first step," said a student named Alex, seated toward the front. He told of taking part in a protest after the Ferguson grand jury decision and being joined by a white friend. "And he stood next to me the entire time. And if you stand with us on these issues, that's the biggest thing you can do."

A white student who identified himself

as Sean, added, "Something that is really important as a white ally is to follow black leadership and movements."

David Corbie '15 urged white students not to be held back by "white guilt." "We all have racist tendencies," he said. "I mean, as an African-American male, I've been socialized in the system, too. Honestly, we're moving forward to a progressive future, and all you have to do is acknowledge it. If you want to gain allies, you just have to be able to acknowledge your own racism and move on from it."

Christian Rougeau '17 (whose father was on the panel) suggested that "there are a lot of people on this campus who don't even acknowledge that there is a problem. I feel like the best way for white friends or white allies to help us is by just being

another voice. Our voice is strong, but with your voice we can be even stronger."

Ernestina Cheng '15 noted that for many students Boston College is the most diverse place they've yet lived. She suggested a University "diversity core" requirement—a program beyond the existing cultural diversity curriculum requirement—"that really helps you go through your experiences and talk about the experiences that other people have."

Afterward, Christian Rougeau said he found the discussion uplifting. "I think the students had a really good moment," he said. "Sort of a moment of love, universal appreciation of the issue."

Aaron said that while discussions of racial justice in the classroom and at events are helpful, "I feel like the prob-

lem, especially at a place like BC, is not a problem of awareness. It's a problem of understanding, and understanding at a human and emotional level, rather than an intellectual one."

The coda for the event may well have been presented early on, by Nancy Pineda-Madrid. She quoted the poet Gloria Anzaldúa noting that "the struggle has always been inner, and is played out in outer terrains."

More such events are being planned by the Jesuit Institute, says Keenan, involving students, faculty, and guest speakers. ■

Dave Denison is a writer in the Boston area.



A video of the discussion may be viewed via Full Story, at bc.edu/bcm.

OVERTIME



At "Skate with the Eagles" on January 11, hosted by the Council for Women of Boston College, hockey forward Meghan Grieves '16 greeted fans of the sport.

Partners in health

By Thomas Cooper

Research across the departments

Ten invited faculty members presented interdisciplinary research into public health issues at an all-day symposium on December 11. Sponsored by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research, and held in the Yawkey Center, the event also included a student poster session and a keynote address by Dr. Philip J. Landrigan '63.

Associate professor of law Dean Hashimoto and Erika Sabbath, an assistant professor at the School of Social Work (SSW) detailed their investigation of how the workplace environment affects hospital employees. Data they collected on 1,500 nurses and aides showed, for example, that more than 40 percent reported being verbally abused by a patient or colleague, and that those affected had up to a 52 percent greater risk of on-the-job injury—whether a needle stick or back strain—than did other workers.

Summer Sherburne Hawkins, an SSW assistant professor, reported on health consequences of higher cigarette prices. She discovered that for every dollar of cigarette tax increase between 2000 and 2010, women with low educational attainment purchased an average of 18 fewer cigarettes per month; the birth weight of their babies increased by approximately five grams.

James Keenan, SJ, the Canisius Chair and director of the Jesuit Institute, described his efforts to bring Catholic teachings on ethics and social justice into discussions of HIV/AIDS, beginning with a book of essays, *Catholic Ethicists on HIV/AIDS Prevention* (2000), which he edited.

Rebekah Levine Coley, professor of counseling, developmental, and educational psychology in the Lynch School of Education, looked at housing conditions and health levels among poor children (more than one in five U.S. children lives below the national poverty line). She

reported data showing the detrimental effects of frequent moves and substandard housing on cognitive development.

Assistant professor of sociology Sara Moorman described the impact of neighborhood composition on residents over age 65. Moorman found that when the percentage of families in a neighborhood exceeded 56 percent, older residents were more likely to report feelings of isolation.

Associate history professor Martin Summers traced the role of race in diagnoses of mental illness for the 50 years up to and through World War II.

Biology professor Welkin Johnson described his research on a class of retroviruses related to HIV that have been carried in the DNA of our genome for millions of years and constitute approximately eight percent of the human genome. ("Generally speaking," he said, "we are more virus than we are genes.")

Michael Naughton, the Ferris Professor

of Physics, talked about his lab's work on nanotechnology with healthcare applications such as disease detection, and the advantages for remote online diagnosis.

Melissa Sutherland, assistant professor in the Connell School of Nursing, reported her survey of 615 college women in the northeast. Ninety-two percent responded that they had not been asked about any violence or sexual violence in their lives during visits to their college health center on other matters.

At day's end University President William P. Leahy, SJ, awarded the undergraduate poster prize to biochemistry major Chantal Barksdale '15 for her project, "Stimulating the Resolution of Tumor Debris to Control Medulloblastoma." Mehmet Cansoy, a student in the sociology department, received the graduate award for "Maternal Mortality, Democratization, Women's Status, and Ethnic Fractionalization: a Cross-National Study."

Landrigan, whose research on lead in children contributed to the shift to unleaded gasoline in the 1970s, discussed his experiences as well as ongoing challenges in the field of global public health. For an excerpt from his talk, see page 45. ■



The entire symposium may be viewed at Full Story, via bc.edu/bcm.



FROM LEFT: The Lynch School's Coley, sociologist Moorman, and historian Summers.



Yu: "The goal is not to be able to pronounce accurately, but properly."

CLOSE-UP: PYGMALION

"Learn to Pronounce Chinese Names," the email flyer read for a class in Fulton 235 on November 11. Some 40 faculty and staff from the Carroll School of Management, the offices of Residential Life and the Provost, and a range of departments came to the fourth annual tutorial, taught by lecturer in Chinese Xiaoping Yu (shao-cheeng-eu) and run by the Office of International Students and Scholars. OISS director Adrienne Nussbaum said she created the event "out of respect" for the rapidly rising number of Boston College undergraduate and graduate students from mainland China, up from 81 in 2001 to 486 today (the trend across American universities is similar). Mandarin Chinese ranks among the hardest major languages for an English speaker to learn, according to the U.S. Foreign Service Institute, which has determined the average person requires 2,200 hours of classes to become proficient in it (compared with 550 hours for French).

Yu, who moved from Beijing to Boston in 2011 and uses the more accessible first name Bevlyn, had only one hour, and so she said, "The goal is not to be able to pronounce accurately, but properly." As the class enjoyed a lunch of lo mein salad, the ever-encouraging Yu taught the 38 finals (vowels) and 23 initials (consonants) of romanized Mandarin, or "Pinyin." She leaned away from or into the podium to emphasize which of Mandarin's four tones to utter in each syllable (an oft-used example of why this matters: "Mā ma mà mà" means "mother scolds the horse"). The group repeated everything four or five times, following along with a "cheat sheet" Yu had created with English hints such as "j" should be pronounced like the "jee" in "jeep." "It's really pronounced 'zhee,'" said Yu. "But if that's too hard, they will know what you mean if you say 'jee.'" Lynne Pflaumer, an administrative assistant in the chemistry department said she keeps

her cheat sheet on her desk to practice before a Chinese post-doc or visiting scholar arrives.

The class then recited common Chinese phrases ("Ni kuàilè ma?" Are you happy?), family names, and the names of former chairmen of the People's Republic of China and other celebrities. Yu projected portraits of Chinese members of the Boston College faculty, which she ordered from easiest to hardest to pronounce—from assistant professor of history Ling Zhang, pronounced "ling-zhawng," to assistant professor of physics Ruihua He, "roo-ee-hwa-huh."

"Learn to Pronounce Chinese Names" is part of International Education Week, one of OISS's numerous initiatives to help integrate and celebrate the University's international student community, which has grown from 451 students in 2000 to 1,269 today. With more than 210 students from South Korea now studying at the Heights, Nussbaum is considering a future course on "How to Pronounce Korean Names."

—Zachary Jason



FROM LEFT: Jacobs, Daley, Rawson, McNellis, and Huse.

Soldiers once

By Dave Denison

Alumni veterans reflect on the war in Vietnam

The Vietnam War still smolders. That much was clear after an evening panel discussion held at Boston College on November 11, which capped off a day's worth of Veterans Day observances.

The "Experiencing Vietnam" panel brought four Boston College veterans of the conflict to Gasson 100 to talk about the war, 40 years after the U.S. withdrawal. The veterans spoke variously and with emotion about the hostile attitudes encountered stateside in the 1960s and 1970s, and about the lingering pain of losing a war at home that they believed was winnable abroad. The discussion was moderated by history professor Seth Jacobs, who teaches a course on the Vietnam era and has published several books on the subject, including, in 2006, *Cold War Mandarin: Ngo Dinh Diem and the Origins of America's War in Vietnam, 1950–1963*.

The panelists were Paul Daley '63, a retired partner at the law firm

WilmerHale; James Huse Jr. '65, former inspector general of the Social Security Administration, now a consultant; Paul McNellis, SJ, Ph.D. '93, a part-time faculty member in the philosophy department; and Larry Rawson '63, an Emmy Award-winning journalist at ESPN. Speaking to a room full of students, faculty, and members of the public, including some who work on veterans' issues, they described how the Vietnam experience changed them—and the country.

James Huse, who served as an infantry officer starting in June of 1966, recalled coming home in the summer of 1967, when protests and television news coverage were beginning to turn the public against the war. "I thought I was coming home the same way my dad came home from the Navy in World War II," he said. "No way." His brother met him at the airport and told him, "Things have changed, Jim."

"Nobody wanted to talk about the

war," Huse said. "They'd already seen it on TV, and they were sick of it."

Larry Rawson described a similar experience. A Marine Corps officer for three years in the mid-1960s, Rawson recalled flying back to Travis Air Force base in California in 1966. "You get off the plane, at an Air Force base, and there's not one sign saying 'welcome home'—anywhere on the base. I never forgot that moment," Rawson said.

The four veterans served in different regions of Vietnam, at different times. Paul Daley, a naval officer, flew 212 combat missions beginning in 1965 and ending in 1967. By 1968, he recalled, he was teaching in the Navy Reserved Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program at Yale and defending U.S. policy in debates with antiwar activists such as the Rev. William Sloane Coffin.

When Jacobs asked the veterans for their feelings about the antiwar movement, the ever-simmering political arguments over the conflict emerged. "If you ask people [who were] over there fighting," Daley began, "what riles them the most . . . This was a war in which we won every single battle that the U.S. fought in." Even the famous Tet Offensive in 1968, Daley said, was misreported by the American media as a setback. "We did not lose Tet on the battlefield," he said, "we lost in Washington."

Paul McNellis echoed Daley's view. McNellis saw the latter stage of the war, serving as an infantry officer with the South Vietnamese army in the "Vietnamization" phase, as U.S. troops were withdrawing. "We really had won by the summer of 1972," McNellis said. Speaking of the South Vietnamese allies, he said, "We cut them off at the knees, in 1973, 1974, 1975." McNellis took the view that negotiations could have led to the kind of agreement that divided Korea in the 1950s.

Huse wasn't so sure. "But that was too late," he said. "It was an impossible place to understand. . . . It was hard for officers to understand whether we were winning or losing, or what we were doing."

One thing the panelists agreed upon was that much of the contemporaneous media coverage and later Hollywood treatments of the Vietnam War did not reflect

their experience (though Huse did cite a film with battle scenes that were, he said, “as close to reality as you’re ever going to see”—*We Were Soldiers*, from 2002). McNellis noted that new scholarship is providing a fuller picture of the war. “I’d say to students, if you’re interested in this—and I think you should be—read, read, read,” McNellis said. “Read skeptically and carefully. Don’t let Hollywood and popular culture decide what you should think about this.”

That’s the thrust of Jacobs’s course “Vietnam: America’s War at Home and Abroad,” which is now in its 14th year.

THE PANELISTS RECEIVED A STANDING ovation after the hour-and-a-half discussion. As students and faculty mingled with veterans at a reception after the panel, there was a different kind of “generation gap” from the one discussed in the 1960s and 1970s. Some students said they found it hard to grasp why returning soldiers were treated poorly in those years.

“I mean, I have issues with politicians,” said marketing and information systems major Paul Hillen ’15, “but the guys who are over there risking their lives? I don’t understand the hostility toward the soldiers themselves.”

Hillen was attending with leadership and management major Peter Connell ’16, who is in ROTC. Asked about his view of the Vietnam War, Connell said, “I wouldn’t say I look at it with a gung-ho mentality, but to think that the people at home at the time could be so negative to the faces of the soldiers themselves?” Connell believes Americans learned a lesson from Vietnam: Welcome soldiers home, show respect to “the individuals for their efforts.”

Hillen, who was born in 1993, said he learned about World War II in school and has memories of the second Gulf War. But the politics of the Vietnam War seem more complicated to him, which he said is one reason he enrolled in Jacobs’s course. Hillen said he appreciates “hearing about [the war] from people who were actually there—because it’s such a politically charged war that it’s tough to feel that you’re ever getting a right answer, no matter who talks about it, especially people who haven’t been there.”

Another student in attendance was Alexandra Curran ’15, who took Jacobs’s course several years ago. At the time of the Veterans Day panel, she was close to finishing her senior thesis on the experiences of Vietnamese women during the Vietnam War, en route to graduating mid-year with a major in history. Curran said it was in Jacobs’s course that she became especially interested in the “multiple narratives of the war.” As the veterans on the panel discussed their motivations to serve, she noted, some spoke about their belief that it was an American responsibility to halt the spread of communism.

“I think it’s very difficult for someone from my generation to put yourself in that position and understand what this fear of communism was all about,” Curran said. “And how Americans felt they had a duty to stamp out communism around the

globe. I mean, I can sit here today, as a millennial, and say, well, we had no business over there, we had no business interfering, but at the same time, I’m not of that generation.”

“Experiencing Vietnam” was sponsored by *Boston College Magazine*, the Boston College Veterans Alumni Network, and the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences. Paul Delaney ’66, a past Veterans Alumni Network chair who traveled from Florida to attend the day’s events (which included a Mass and a ceremony at the campus Veterans Memorial), said later he “had an emotional high for a couple of days” because of what he saw and heard. “We had an opportunity to tell our story,” he said. ■



A video of the panel discussion may be viewed via Full Story, at bc.edu/bcm.

Plenty

In December, Boston College Dining Services invited undergraduates to submit their favorite family recipes, with an eye to identifying a new dish for the University’s spring menu. The “Taste of Home” contest drew entrées, desserts, and side dishes. Narrowed to a field of five by dining services administrators and student interns, the finalists will be served at the Newton Campus’s Stuart Hall on February 24. Dean Elwell ’17, of Rhode Island, proposed this contender, here transcribed by Stuart production manager Pedro Garcia:

CHEESY MASHED CAULIFLOWER

INGREDIENTS

150 pounds fresh cauliflower	2 ounces salt
2 ounces garlic, minced	2 ounces ground black pepper
4 cups cream cheese, softened	1 cup chopped fresh chives,
2 cups grated Parmesan cheese	for garnish

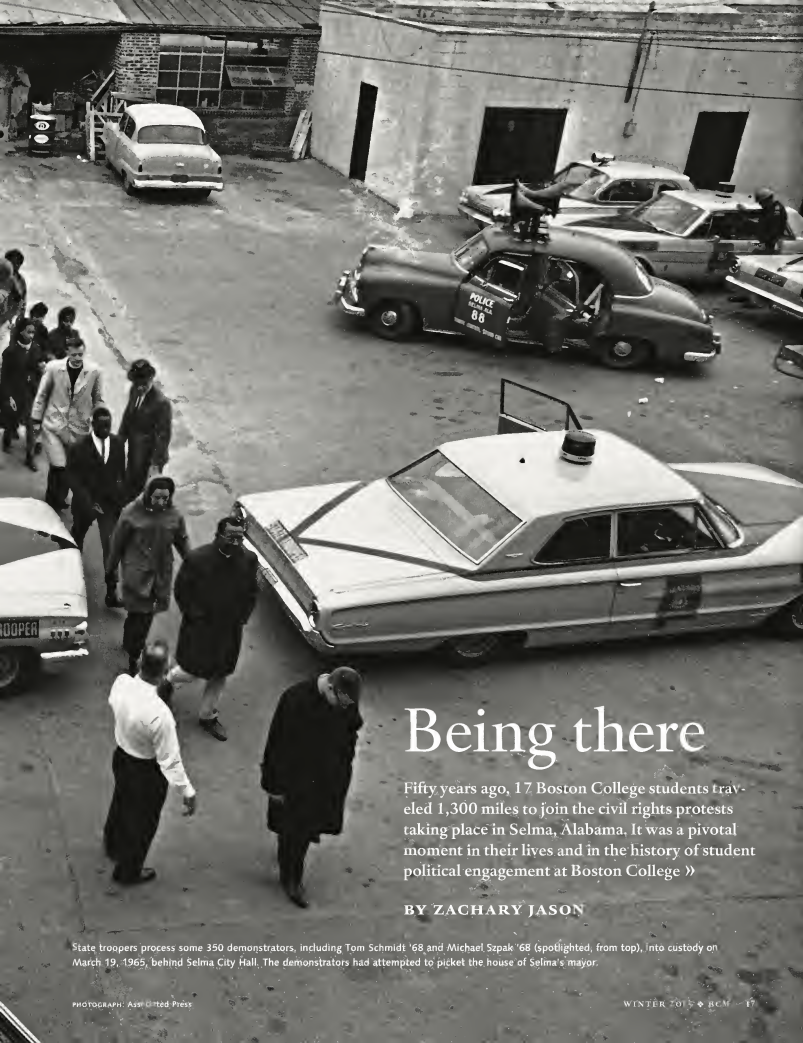
PREPARATION

Clean and cut cauliflower into very small pieces. Boil until tender. Drain thoroughly. Mash the cauliflower together with garlic, cream cheese, salt, and black pepper until roughly combined, not puréed. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese and chives on top, serve.

YIELD: 400 servings

The remaining finalists are: green bean bundles (bacon-wrapped), submitted by Katie Tu ’17, of New Jersey; chicken lazone (seasoned with chili powder and cayenne pepper), from Jenna Montano ’17, of Connecticut; tortellini salad (with artichoke hearts), from Jenny Buckley ’15, of Massachusetts; and chicken and rice casserole (with cream of celery soup), from Mike Wenger ’17, of Minnesota. Students will elect a winner on February 24, and it will join the Stuart rotation. —Zachary Jason





Being there

Fifty years ago, 17 Boston College students traveled 1,300 miles to join the civil rights protests taking place in Selma, Alabama. It was a pivotal moment in their lives and in the history of student political engagement at Boston College »

BY ZACHARY JASON

State troopers process some 350 demonstrators, including Tom Schmidt '68 and Michael Szpak '68 (spotlighted, from top), into custody on March 19, 1965, behind Selma City Hall. The demonstrators had attempted to picket the house of Selma's mayor.

Situated along the banks of the Alabama River near the center of the state, Selma, Alabama, was a segregated town with an adult population of 15,000 blacks and 14,400 whites in 1964. More than 80 percent of the blacks lived below the poverty line, and less than two percent were registered to vote. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned racial discrimination in setting voter qualifications, but Governor George Wallace and fellow segregationists found ways of using literacy tests, poll taxes, and other tactics to hold down black voter rolls. In Selma, the registration office at the county courthouse was open just two days a month. And when the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) attempted a registration campaign there in July 1964, a state judge issued an injunction prohibiting any "assembly of three persons or more in a public place" sponsored by a civil rights organization.

Fed up, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and a few dozen members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and SNCC defied the injunction and led unregistered Selma residents on daily marches to the county courthouse beginning on January 18, 1965; in response, the Selma police and a posse of 200, many wielding cattle prods, stationed themselves outside the entrance, where they beat and arrested anyone trying to enter, including children, who held signs reading, "Let our parents vote."

Within a month more than 3,000 people were arrested, Dr. King among them. Then, on February 18, in the nearby town of Marion, 500 demonstrators took to the streets in a peaceful SCLC-led protest. State troopers attacked the crowd, mortally clubbing and shooting Baptist deacon Jimmie Lee Jackson.

It was a galvanizing assault. Plans took shape for a 54-mile march, east from Selma to the capitol building in Montgomery. There would be three attempts in all. To ensure that the governor and the national media paid attention, the SCLC and SNCC recruited extra marchers, many of them clergy and college students from the north.

IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON of Friday, March 19, 1965, two dozen Alabama state troopers in riot gear faced down a crowd of 350 detainees behind Selma City Hall. "Square your feet!" the troopers barked as they thumped billy clubs into their palms. "Don't talk! Don't move!"

The prisoners, including 12 Boston College undergraduates and one professor, had been arrested en masse earlier in the day while convening to picket the home of Joseph Smitherman, the mayor of Selma, after he had refused to provide escorts for African-Americans trying to register to vote in town. Just 12 days earlier, on March 7, which had come to be known as Bloody Sunday, troopers had attacked some 600 civil-rights demonstrators, led by Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) chairman John Lewis, as they tried to march, for the first time, across the Edmund Pettus Bridge—named after a Ku Klux Klan Grand Dragon—just four blocks from City Hall, on their way to Montgomery. On foot and horseback, the troopers had unleashed attack dogs, fired tear gas, charged the demonstrators, and struck them with nightsticks and bullwhips. Footage of the scene appeared on the national news that night, and in the days that followed, more than 25,000 men and women traveled to Selma to express their solidarity with the demonstrators. Which is how those 12 students, 11 men and one woman, found themselves detained behind City Hall.

They were an unlikely crew, and they were terrified. Few had ever participated in a protest before. None had ever been arrested. Most had not been south of Washington, D.C. All, however, had seen the TV clips of the troopers beating the demonstrators on Bloody Sunday—and now they were worried about what those same troopers might do to them. "They just kept beating their clubs and staring at us," recalls one of the former students, Robert Gundersen '65, JD'68, "letting us believe it was only a matter of time before they attacked."

The idea of going to Selma had occurred to Gundersen only four days earlier, on March 15, a snowy Monday morning in Chestnut Hill. He and his friend Gerard Kiley '65, MSW'74, both English majors and editors for the *Heights*, were drinking coffee in the Lyons Hall basement cafeteria, killing time before their 9:00 A.M. classes. One of them, probably Gundersen, was reading a front-page *Boston Globe* story about a memorial rally that had been held the previous afternoon on Boston Common for the 38-year-old



FROM LEFT: Gundersen, Hayden, Downs (née Flagg), Peter Lareau, Jay Bryant, Richard Lareau, Michael Greene, McGough, and Kiley beside their station wagon on the Chestnut Hill Campus on March 16, the day they left for Selma.

Unitarian-Universalist minister James Reeb, who had traveled from Boston to Selma on March 9, only to be beaten to death with a pipe by white segregationists. The event had sparked demonstrations from Chicago to Budapest, but in Boston, where 25,000 people turned out, it was personal: Reeb was a community organizer in Roxbury, and he and his wife and four children were well-known in the community. After the murder, students and faculty at Harvard, Northeastern University, and Boston University had donned black mourning armbands and joined silent marches from their campuses to the memorial on the Common.

Nothing of the sort happened at Boston College. It was a more provincial place: Catholic theology still dominated the core curriculum; men were required to wear a jacket and tie to class; women wouldn't be admitted into the College of Arts and Sciences for another five years; and Doris Day musicals served as Friday-night entertainment in Devlin Hall, as one graduate recalls. The greatest display of activism in Boston College's 100-year history had occurred not long before, on December 3, 1962, when some 3,500 students, Kiley among them, marched from campus down Commonwealth Avenue toward Cardinal Richard Cushing's residence. "Give us what we deserve!" they had chanted. What atrocity were they protesting? The University's decision not to play in that year's Gotham Bowl. "Isn't this bowl beneath your dignity?" Cushing said, and sent them away.

Gundersen and Kiley, both longtime Massachusetts resi-

dents who remain friends today, were two of the more well-informed students on campus. Because they sometimes reported for the *Heights* on the strikes taking place at other universities over tuition, women's rights, or racial discrimination, their classmates considered them progressives. They only learned of the Reeb memorial, however, upon seeing the report in the *Globe*.

Fellow *Heights* senior editor Michael Greene '65, MA'67, also saw the report, apparently. As Gundersen and Kiley recall, he strode up to their table and his first words were "Let's go to Selma."

Gundersen and Kiley agreed, even though they didn't know where Selma was. The three then began inviting others to join them—and, to their surprise, a number readily accepted. One was Phil McGough '65, a New York City native and magna cum laude-bound English major. "I had no sense of the consequences," he recalls. "It just sounded like a noble adventure." Joseph Hayden '66 was another. "I was not an activist," says Hayden, who now lives in New Jersey. "But I felt a spontaneous outpouring of euphoria. I was thinking this is what you hoped you would have done against the Nazis."

Not everybody said yes, of course. According to Kiley, one senior editor for the *Heights* wanted to go but declined, fearing what his neighbors in South Boston would think of him if they found out. But by that afternoon four more students had joined the group: the brothers Peter Lareau '65, JD'68, and Richard Lareau '68, from Fairport, New York;

Marsha (Flagg) Downs, from Revere, who worked in the computer center and took classes in the Evening College; and Belmont native Jay Bryant '65, a former member of the conservative student club Young Americans for Freedom.

What next? The students didn't know, so they called the young Harvard theologian Rev. Harvey Cox, whom Dr. King had appointed to coordinate the travels of all Selma-bound protestors from Massachusetts—a group that ended up numbering more than 800. Already in Selma, Cox told the students to attend a nonviolence training session that evening in Roxbury, at the local headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Gundersen, Kiley, and Hayden went and learned how to curl on the ground to protect their head, testicles, and internal organs. Hayden remembers that a Baptist minister, the Rev. Bill England, concluded by saying, "There is one thing I can promise you: You'll never be the same again after you've gone to Selma. May God go with you." The SCLC hadn't yet set a date for the next march attempt, but Cox advised them to get to Alabama as soon as possible.

The students' families responded differently. "The hardest task for all of us was going home and telling our parents," Kiley says. When Gundersen told his mother, who was a widow, she looked at him as though he was insane. "If you go," she said, "you can't come back to the house."

Undeterred, Gundersen called Avis and rented the biggest car he could, a seven-seat station wagon. And at 2:00 P.M. on Tuesday, March 16, the nine members of the *Heights* group grabbed their sleeping bags, crammed themselves into the car, and hit the road.

TWO DAYS AFTER BLOODY SUNDAY, on what national media would soon call Turnaround Tuesday, March 9, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and 2,500 demonstrators began a second attempt to march to Montgomery. But a federal-court judge for the middle district of Alabama, Frank Johnson, issued a temporary restraining order, so the demonstrators halted and turned around peacefully, at the same bridge where many protestors had recently been attacked. Judge Johnson would deliberate for days before lifting the ban, as thousands of additional demonstrators from around the country converged on Selma for a third attempt to march.

Meanwhile a response was taking shape in Washington. At 9:00 P.M. on Monday, March 15, in answer to the events in Selma, President Lyndon Johnson made a nationally televised speech in which he urged Congress to pass a more robust voting-rights bill. "It's not just Negroes, but really it is all of us who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice," he said. And then, for the first time in his

presidency but not the last, he echoed the phrase that had become the mantra of the civil rights movement: "And we shall overcome."

Nineteen-year-old Thomas Schmidt '68 heard the speech broadcast over the intercom in the McElroy Commons basement. He had just finished studying for the night, and he paused to listen. The civil rights movement was an interest of his. To keep up he subscribed to the muckraking newsletter *I. F. Stone's Weekly*—in part, he recalls, to "needle" his conservative father. He continued down the hallway and noticed that the Boston College Sodality, a community-service and spiritual formation group run by Jesuit faculty, had posted a sign-up sheet outside its door for students interested in marching in Selma. English professor Francis X. Shea, SJ, a Dorchester-born priest who had recently been pressing the University to recruit more African-American students, was to lead the trip. The fact that the Sodality was organizing the journey appealed to Schmidt, who now practices law in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. "It gave the trip much more of a spiritual spine," he says. "It wasn't just a street tactic." He added his name.

Bryan Gaynor '66, an economics major from Milwaukee who now lives in Arcata, California, acted even more impulsively. "I was just upset about the events on the bridge," he says. "I saw the list, added my name, and didn't think anything of it. The list was so long, and I thought they would select on basis of a background in nonviolent protesting. And I had zero. Zip. Then they called, and I said, 'Sure.'"

Sixty-three Boston College students signed up. More than 40, however, didn't meet the SCLC's requirement that they receive their parents' permission and ensure access to \$500 so that they could post bail if arrested. Others dropped out after attending the nonviolence training session in Roxbury, where they were made fully aware of the dangers of confrontations with state troopers.

For the Boston College students who attended the training session, just traveling to Roxbury, only five miles from the Heights, was a new experience. Many had never visited an African-American community. In 1965, Boston College was almost all white, with only 10 black undergraduates in

When Gundersen told his mother, who was a widow, she looked at him as though he was insane. "If you go," she said, "you can't come back to the house." Undeterred, Gundersen called Avis and rented the biggest car he could.



This SNCC meal card admitted Gundersen to two church kitchens.

a student body of 6,500; there wouldn't be a tenured black faculty member for another three years. The college had graduated its first black student back in 1937, but in the three decades since, only a few dozen others had followed in his footsteps. And they were largely invisible. "I don't remember one African-American at BC," McGough says. Michael Szpak '68, a freshman from Waltham who also joined the Sodality trip, says, "I don't believe there were any black students."

Szpak's memory failed him on that count: One of the others in the Sodality group that traveled to Selma was Mark Gray '66, JD'74, the only African-American from Boston College who made the trip that spring. "We had a big class my year," Gray says sardonically, correcting the record. "There were four of us."

Gray remembers classmates who told him they feared black athletes. At other times the prejudice was less subtle. On March 19, the *Heights* published a student op-ed on the state of affairs in Selma, titled "Civil Wrongs," in which the author railed against the "attempt to send students into this explosive situation," calling it "misdirected," and went on to claim, "Southern society, including Governor Wallace, does not deny the Negro the right to vote because he is unequal, but because he is not intelligently able to exercise that right."

Those on the Sodality roster, like those in the *Heights* group, met resistance from their parents. Tom Schmidt didn't even bother trying to get permission from his father; he remembers he either persuaded Shea to make an exception or forged his father's signature, and told him about the trip only after he returned from it. Mark Gray's parents tried to convince him not to go. "They knew the reality of violence toward blacks," he says. "They came up from South Carolina in 1927, during the Great Migration. In retro-

spect, they had to relive the experiences they had escaped." But Gray, who had participated in the March on Washington two years earlier, stuck with his decision and even convinced the director of the University Chorale, Daniel Foley, SJ, to visit his house and offer his parents a blessing in sending their son. "He helped," Gray says. "But they *knew* why they didn't want me to go. They knew lynchings."

In the end, seven students made the Sodality's final cut: Schmidt, Gaynor, Gray, Szpak, Gerry O'Malley '66, Paul Dimond '65, and Richard Minisce, MA'68. To raise money for the trip, they held collection buckets in the McElroy and

Lyons dining halls, and by Tuesday afternoon they had raised \$665. "Some faculty members emptied their pockets," the *Heights* reported, "while others gave their lunch money. Student support was, however, not as heavy as the Sodality had hoped."

With the money they raised, the Sodality group was able to charter a Greyhound bus with other marchers, set to return Saturday, March 20. They boarded the bus at 10:45 on Tuesday evening, nine hours after the *Heights* crew left town, and settled in for the long ride to Montgomery.

For Gray, fear set in quickly as the Sodality group hurtled toward what he knew would be a dangerous situation. "The bus is going 60 miles an hour," he recalls, "and I can't get off." Others wouldn't worry until they arrived. Szpak remembers spending most of the ride memorizing a poem he would have to recite to a notoriously exacting English professor when he returned. "At that point," he says, "I was much more afraid of him than whatever was in Selma."

WITH ROCK MUSIC BLARING on the radio, the *Heights* crew drove south into the night, buoyant with bravado. "We all felt we could die for the cause," recalls Marsha Downs, who now lives in New Hampshire. "We were too young to really believe we would. We were superheroes."

The next day, March 17, near Atlanta, Georgia state troopers caught sight of their northern plates and pulled them over for questioning. Jay Bryant, the driver for much of the trip, told the officers they were on vacation, and after a few minutes they were sent them on their way—but not before the officers' accents made clear to the students just

how far they'd already traveled from Boston. "All of a sudden," Hayden says, "the seriousness of what we were doing sank in." In the evening, passing through Montgomery, they saw the Confederate flag flying atop the capitol dome.

That afternoon, Judge Johnson had lifted the injunction. In fact, he'd called the right to march "commensurate with the enormity of the wrongs that are being protested." Dr. King and the SCLC at last set the march for Sunday, the 21st. The *Heights* crew was thrilled and anxious, but the timing would disappoint the Sodality contingent, who had committed to returning to Boston by bus on Saturday.

At 9:00 that night, after driving nonstop, the *Heights* group arrived in Selma and headed straight for the Green Street Baptist Church, where Cox, their one contact in the South, had told them to find him. Church staff welcomed the men in and let them crash on the basement floor, along with a couple hundred other male demonstrators. Downs, the only woman, was escorted to the home of a black family that had volunteered to quarter marchers.

The Sodality group turned up on the 18th. They, too, had been told to head for the church. For a couple of days both groups of Boston College students, along with growing crowds of newly arrived marchers, passed the time listening to motivational speeches, singing revival songs, attending nonviolent training sessions, and wandering around Selma. The white parts of town, they soon figured out, had paved roads, whereas the black parts of town had only dirt roads. Throughout these first days, Hayden kept asking the others, "What time period did we jump back to?"

The men in the *Heights* group continued to sleep in the church basement. But the Sodality volunteers joined Downs in staying in the homes of black citizens—homes that were often little more than tin shacks. Most of the students had never seen poverty like this before. Downs remembers chickens walking in and out of her host's front door, and the children heating water on the stove to fill a cast-iron bathtub in the living room. Szpak stayed with a single elderly woman who turned on the television soon after he arrived to watch Governor George Wallace deliver a speech in which he called the impending march "communist street warfare." It's a moment Szpak has never forgotten. "I always think of that juxtaposition," he says about watching Wallace speak. "Him—and then her, on the couch next to me."

The Boston College students found themselves berated by local whites at almost every turn. "When I got there I was afraid of black people," Gundersen says. "Within 24 hours I was afraid of white people." On Thursday morning, Downs, Greene, and a couple of black residents they had befriended walked past a mother pushing a toddler in a stroller. "I remarked how cute her daughter was," Downs recalls. "She leaned over and told the girl, 'Don't you dare talk to that damn nigger-lover.'" When they and other volunteers

couldn't get a ride back to their temporary berths at night, they walked in groups and stayed in the shadows to avoid harassment. SCLC volunteers drove Gray to and from his quarters, but because Alabama outlawed integrated vehicles, he had to remain hidden on the floor under the back seat. "Try it sometime," he says. "Pick a neighborhood that's scary to you. Ride on the floor. How long does the drive feel?"

ON FRIDAY MORNING, following the orders of James Bevel, the SCLC director of direct action and nonviolent education, the *Heights* crew and three members of the Sodality group (the rest happened to be in church) set out on their first mission: In small groups, teaming up with black activists, they strolled through a white neighborhood, trying, as Bevel put it, "to arouse the consciences" of the residents.

The walk only aroused ire. One resident punched a Catholic priest from Chicago. A woman chased another five demonstrators off her street with a gun. At that point, the *Heights* group joined a growing crowd of demonstrators heading for the house of Joseph Smitherman, Selma's mayor—and Wilson Baker, Selma's public-safety commissioner, had them all arrested. Ushered onto a police bus, the detainees began singing "We Shall Overcome," which



A doctor examines Leo Haley after he was attacked on Saturday, March 20.

Teenagers started to throw rocks, and Gaynor ran over to a National Guardsman in front of an armored Jeep. "Someone's going to get injured!" Gaynor said. The guardsman, no older than Gaynor, stood with his arms folded, smiling. "Yeah," he responded drily.

incensed Baker. "This has ceased to be a Negro movement," he told a *New York Times* reporter at the time. "It's become a misfit white movement. At least we had good music when the Negroes were demonstrating."

Baker had the detainees taken to City Hall—and so it was that the 12 students and F.X. Shea, along with the rest of the detainees, ended up facing those state troopers in riot gear behind the building. They were kept there for three hours, unsure of their fate. Gundersen remembers badly needing to relieve himself but not daring to ask permission. "They were just waiting for somebody to say something," he recalls, "so they'd be justified in cracking heads."

Late in the afternoon, the police finally sent the detainees inside, into overnight protective custody in an adjacent community building, and a multi-faith party ensued. A rabbi offered a blessing at the start of the Sabbath. Shea sang a Roman Catholic hymn. Baptist ministers sang spirituals. They all chanted protest songs. The police wouldn't feed them, but Kiley remembers SNCC members wearing black ski masks broke in through skylights and delivered sandwiches and cans of warm Coke. Kiley had the science-fiction novel *A Canticle for Leibowitz* in his back pocket, and he ripped it into thirds for others to read. Schmidt met SNCC and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) members and listened rapt as they voiced opinions against the Vietnam War, the first he had ever heard. (A Boston College chapter of SDS wouldn't form until 1967.)

The detainees were released the following morning, Saturday the 20th, at which point they learned that President Johnson had agreed to federalize the National Guard to protect those marching from Selma toward Montgomery the next day.

That evening, Kiley ran into another Boston College student: Leo Haley, a graduate student at the School of Social Work. Haley, who back in Boston volunteered for the Catholic Interracial Council, had raised enough money from classmates to fly to Selma on Tuesday morning. His appearance alarmed Kiley. Earlier in the evening, Haley said, he had been walking to a planning meeting when two white teen-

agers stopped him. "Why did you come down here?" they asked him. Before he could answer, one of them grabbed him and held him down, and the other pulled out a safety razor and sliced a two-and-a-half-inch "X" into his right jaw. "Something to remember Selma by," they told him.

"Leo was an innocent, trusting soul," says Kiley, who had gone to St. Clement High School with him. After hearing Haley's story, he offered him some advice. "This is like a war zone," he said. "The goal is to survive. You have to be more careful." After talking to his parents, Haley decided not to take part in the upcoming march, and flew home the next morning—by which time most of the students in the Sodality group were themselves begrudgingly also en route to Boston. Bryan Gaynor, however, decided he would stay.

ON SUNDAY MORNING, the *Heights* group awoke early. The men donned the sport coats they usually wore to church. Downs put on a skirt, and at about 8:00 they headed over to the Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church about a mile from the bridge. By the time Dr. King arrived, three hours later, some 3,200 marchers had assembled, and at 12:46 the march began, led by a collection of high-profile activists: Dr. King; the Nobel Peace Prize-winner Ralph Bunche; Ralph Bevel and the civil-rights leaders Ralph Abernathy, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, and John Lewis; and Cager Lee, the murdered Jimmie Lee Jackson's 82-year-old grandfather. Nineteen armored jeeps and four military trucks trailed the marchers; two helicopters hovered above.

An hour later, momentarily, they crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge. "Immediately I felt a tremendous sense of history in the making," Hayden says. "Only 12 days before on that bridge, people were bitten by police dogs, sprayed with high-pressure hoses. . . . And there we were, marching onward."

Black citizens cheered along the sidewalk. Some whites screamed obscenities from passing cars, one painted on the side with the words, "Coonsville, USA." Bryan Gaynor was appointed as a marshal with a charge of leading and protecting about 50 other marchers. "I was terrified all day," he says. At one point, teenagers started to throw rocks at them. Gaynor ran over to a National Guardsman standing in front of an armored Jeep. "Someone's going to get injured!" Gaynor said. The guardsman, no older than Gaynor, stood with his arms folded, smiling. "Yeah," he responded drily. "You gotta look out. Try not to get hit."

At that point, Gaynor noticed a Confederate flag sewn onto the guardsman's chest. All the guardsmen in the area, he soon realized, had one.

Kiley was asked to lead 20 local black kindergartners. "I

kept running circles around the group to keep them together," he says, "like a cowboy in a Western." They asked Kiley about life in the North. What was snow like? Could they go to college? Would they be treated any better up there?

By 5:00 in the afternoon, the marchers had traveled seven miles and stopped for the day, 47 miles from Montgomery. Highway 80 narrowed to two lanes at that point, and only 300 demonstrators would be permitted to march the remaining distance, per Judge Johnson's order.

For the Boston College students, it was the end of the march. That evening, in a field on the side of the road, they ate cornbread, spaghetti, pork, and beans with the rest of the marchers, and then made their way back to Selma, where they spent the night. At dawn, they stuffed themselves back into their station wagon, filled the tank at the one black gas station in town, and headed home.

THE HEIGHTS CREW, the Sodality group, and Leo Haley returned to campus changed. Newly sensitive to the racial inequality that plagued their own city, some started tutoring in Roxbury. The same week he returned,



Kiley gives a local child a boost to see Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speak in front of Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church before the march on Sunday, March 21.

Gundersen, who had planned to be an English teacher, rushed an application to Boston College Law School and enrolled the following fall. He earned his JD in 1968 and has represented affordable-housing projects in Dorchester and Roxbury ever since. Gaynor had planned to be an accountant, but he, too, decided to become a lawyer: He attended Columbia Law School and has practiced as a public-interest attorney in California since the mid-1970s. "Selma changed my whole direction in life," he says. Gray, Schmidt, Hayden, Peter Lareau, and Philip McCough also chose to pursue legal careers.

Marsha Downs dropped out of Boston College after her freshman year and returned to Selma, where she helped African-American residents register to vote until the following June, which was two months before Congress passed the Voting Rights Act. Kiley earned a master's in social work at Boston College and then served in Boston's division of child guardianship for a decade before taking up his current occupation as an information-technology executive. Greene earned a Ph.D. in African literature and taught English at colleges throughout New England for 40 years; Szpak became a Methodist minister and has worked for the AFL-CIO for 28 years. Two of the students died not long after Selma: Jay Bryant was killed in a car accident in Boston only seven months after the march, at 23, and Leo Haley died of heart failure in October 1966, at 24. (Haley House at Boston College is named for him.) Richard Minisce, who served in the Peace Corps and was a New York social worker before becoming a real estate agent in Oregon, died of ALS in 2007.

Upon their return, Kiley and Hayden reflected on the trip in the *Heights*. Kiley wrote that "the Negroes of Selma and the rest of Alabama and Mississippi have nowhere to go but up"; Hayden described meeting a Japanese man who had said it was "his duty as a member of the human race" to join the march, and a priest in the improvised holding pen who had called his fellow detainees heroes. Explaining why he had gone to Selma, Hayden wrote, "We wished to demonstrate by our physical presence that the white people of the North could no longer stand idly."

After Selma, the *Heights* began paying more attention to the civil-rights movement. Between April and December of 1965, the paper published twice as many articles on the subject as it had in the previous three years combined—many of them written by Kiley, Gundersen, and Szpak. The editors repeatedly interviewed Robert Drinan, SJ, the dean of the Law School and an activist who criticized the University for its "basic inequality and racial imbalance." Ad spaces normally reserved in the paper for oxford shirts and pool halls were replaced with announcements of local SCLC meetings. The Sodality helped bring civil rights leaders such as Julian Bond to campus to speak. In the fall after Selma, Szpak became the



FROM LEFT: Gundersen, Kiley, and Gray, in McElroy Commons on January 23, 2015.

founding co-director of the Sodality's Project Opportunity, a program to help local underserved African-American high school students prepare for and apply to Boston College. In 1967, Jesuit Superior General Pedro Arrupe wrote to U.S. Jesuits, demanding that they minister to underserved African-Americans and provide them with "special scholarships." The next year, the University began the Black Talent Program, offering \$100,000 in full four-year scholarships, and the undergraduate black population quadrupled the following fall, to about 45. Black students themselves ran the program for five years, admitting more than 300. In 1980, the program dissolved and the Office of AHANA (African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native-American) Student Programs opened, which continues to offer minority students academic support and career counseling as the Thea Bowman AHANA and Intercultural Center. Thirty-two percent of the undergraduate student body today is minority.

Fifty years after Selma, a few vivid images endure in the minds of some of the Boston College marchers. Downs remembers seeing the fold in the back of Dr. King's neck

when she sat behind him while singing gospel songs in the second row of Brown Chapel. Hayden remembers a young black girl from Selma in yellow dress and pigtails, who on the night he arrived thanked him for coming to help and hugged him as if he were "a long lost friend."

Kiley, for his part, remembers a black man he met in the back of a farm truck on the seven-mile return ride to Selma along Highway 80. His kindergarten charges had fallen asleep in the truck bed, and he and the man talked briefly. Kiley could barely understand the man's accent but learned that he was a farmer and former sharecropper from the Mississippi Delta. Both had taken risks in joining the march and had temporarily shared a powerful sense of purpose, but now they were heading back to dramatically different lives: Kiley's in Chestnut Hill, and the farmer's in the Delta. "He knew his life was in danger, but he believed this was a turning point. The spirit in him was so strong, it jumped across to me," Kiley says. "The image of that farmer's lean, leathery face has stayed with me for years and years, whenever I think through where to take my life." ■



DRAMATIC STRESS

As part of the Shakespeare Anthology Project—the brainchild of noted actress, director, scholar, and impresario Tina Packer—students learned to wound and be wounded, with words and with swords drawn. And to consider why

BY MICHAEL BLANDING

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEE PELLEGRINI

"YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY about that pa-tum pa-tum pa-tum pa-tum," thunders Tina Packer in a resonant British accent. "Because it's right there in the body." The accomplished director of most (so far) of the plays of William Shakespeare and founder of the Lenox, Massachusetts-based theater Shakespeare & Company ("fabled"—*American Theatre* magazine has called it; "vibrant"—the *New York Times*), Packer is sitting in a

circle of chairs with 22 students, in Boston College's Bonn Studio. She's giving a lesson on iambic pentameter, the five-beat, 10-syllable line that Shakespeare used for his plays. Lighting gear hangs from the high ceilings of the black-box theater space, and the floor shows haphazard splatters of paint. Packer, 76 years old and wearing a black sweatshirt, tells students to hold fingers to their wrists.

"Drop your breath into your body and count how many pulse beats there are to each breath," continues the director, who is in residence this year as the J. Donald Monan, SJ, Professor in Theater Arts. "There are five pulse beats

OPPOSITE: Packer works with Aryn Mello Pryor '16, as Troilus, on the opening monologue in *Troilus and Cressida*.



to each breath," she says finally: "I want you to think of iambic pentameter as natural, not unnatural. You are intensifying something that is already inside of you." For Packer, Shakespeare is as right as breathing—with the natural pause at the end of each 10-syllable line signaling a new thought. "So you are always in the present moment, you are constantly centering yourself with the breath in the rhythm of your emotions."

To demonstrate, she calls on Sarah Mass '15 to recite a few lines from a speech Mass has been working on: Iago's opening monologue in *Othello*. As the play begins, Iago decries being passed over for a military promotion in favor of an effete rival, setting into motion a train of events that will lead to tragic deaths. The speech is destined to be part of *Honor, Shame, and Violence: A Shakespeare Anthology Project*, a compendium of scenes Packer has been developing with the students, who will perform it on campus in late January.

"And what was he? / Forsooth, a great arithmetician," reads Mass, dressed casually in a burgundy sweater and standing in the center of the circle. "One Michael Cassio, a Florentine / That never set squadron in the field." It seems like pretty generic exposition, but Packer pounces on every word.

"So what are you saying? What was he?" she barks.

"He's trying to say he wasn't a great captain," Mass answers.

"Right, so can I get a 'What was he?'" demands Packer, stressing that Shakespeare ends the line after only four syllables—signaling an intentional pause for effect. "How are you not going to lose the audience in that six syllables of silence?" Packer presses. "It's not just a small question, it's a huge question. Who was he? Huh? Huh? I'll tell you who he was," she waits, dramatically, before spitting the words: "An arithmetician!"

Packer is short and compact, peering over black rectangular glasses as she talks. Her hair is short and mussed—frequently by herself in the midst of a demonstrative point. Commanding and irreverent, she plays as a cross between a drill sergeant and a favorite aunt, albeit one prone to dropping f-bombs. And her tough-love approach to direction bears results.

She stops Mass again at the word "Florentine": "And what do we think of Florentines?"

"They are sissies," ventures Mass.

"Yes, they are!" shouts Packer. "When's the last time Florence didn't lose the battle against Siena for chrissake."

Over three more readings of the passage, Mass comes alive, spewing bile as she conjures up the villainous Iago and makes the ring of students around her feel his jealous rage. One by one, over the next two hours in the twice-weekly class "Shakespeare Acting," each of the students similarly gets up and recites, and each transforms within the space of five minutes, suddenly speaking lines as if they were thinking them for the first time, rather than reading from a page.

"When you are reading it, you are up in your head, saying what does this word mean or that word mean," Packer tells me later in her cramped Rubenstein Hall office up the hill from the Robsham Theater Arts Center, in the midst of

"Shakespeare never went to war, so I began to think where did these ideas come from?" says Packer. "I wanted to see if I could do a project in which Shakespeare gives me some insight into why people commit acts of violence."

going over parts in the play with the stage manager, Mallory Cotter '16. "What I want them to do is own the words. If you have embodied language, you can influence people. Otherwise you are only arguing reason to reason, and that is not how people are persuaded."

Getting Shakespeare into the body is an approach Packer has been cultivating for some 40 years as director of Shakespeare & Company. It's an approach, she says, similar to Shakespeare's own dramatic training. "Where he learned to be an actor was in the classroom," Packer says. "He was taught through the art of rhetoric, so every day he was on his feet delivering speeches—every time he spoke, they needed to make an impact."

The approach resonates with her students. "You feel this need to say the words like your life depends upon it, which is what characters in Shakespeare are doing every time they are opening their mouths," says Mass, who has performed in Boston with the Commonwealth Shakespeare Company (during the summer of 2013, as understudy to Sylvia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*; and as the spirited Imogen in *Cymbeline*). "When she is yelling at you while you are trying to do a monologue, it gets your heart pumping—she is rousing you to do it, and she challenges you to be bigger."

In another meeting of the class a few days later, Packer

1. Joseph Meade '15, as Gloucester, and Sarah Mass '15, as Goneril, perform a scene from *King Lear* 2. Pryor and David Makransky '17 rehearse as the characters in *Antony and Cleopatra*. 3. Rehearsing a scene from *Coriolanus* are (from left) Meade, William Krom '16, Ted Kearnan '17, Julianne Quaes '15, and Cassie Chapados '17. 4. Packer during a rehearsal.

demonstrates an exercise called “dropping in,” in which two students face each other in their chairs, their feet nearly touching. One is expected to speak; the other provides a focus, a sounding board. They stare into each other’s eyes while Packer, just as close, reads lines of dialogue, stopping at a word and repetitively driving it home until it is nearly stripped of meaning. “Are you good?” Packer drones. “Do you feel good? Do you like being good? Is he good?” After each question, she repeats the word “good,” and the student chosen responds with “good,” before Packer moves on to the next question. “Do you want peace? Will God give you peace? Have you found peace?”

When Packer began her own study of Shakespeare some 45 years ago at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, her training, she says, consisted of reciting monologues in lofty accents. “I never learned the art of rhetoric or even the structure of the verse,” she says. The approach made her feel disconnected from the words. As a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company in the early 1970s, she began seeking out teachers who could help her translate the verse structure into a physical experience. Eventually, she came to the United States to work with Scottish voice coach Kristin Linklater, who was develop-

“What’s the story you are trying to tell?” presses combat instructor Asprey. “If you are trying to shame the person it’s a slap. Even a punch can be different depending on whether it’s a surprise jab or a heroic punch.”

ing a series of improvisational body exercises she called “Sound & Movement.” The approach includes drills with word repetition designed, Linklater has written, to “re-route Shakespeare’s words from the contemporary head to the Shakespearean body.” With a grant from the Ford Foundation, Packer and Linklater together began researching the physical roots of Shakespearean theater, eventually leading to the founding of Shakespeare & Company in 1978.

From the beginning, the company has been as much about teaching Shakespeare as it has about performing him. In workshops and courses, it has not only trained a generation of Shakespearean actors and directors, it has also exposed countless high school and college students to the Bard. The company offers a summer institute for schoolteachers and also runs a theater workshop called

Shakespeare in the Courts for at-risk youth, in consultation with the Berkshire Juvenile Court.

Five years ago, Packer’s artistic efforts culminated in an ambitious presentation called *Women of Will*, which debuted in Lenox in the summer of 2010. Part performance, part master class in Shakespearean heroines, it took audiences through a tour of Shakespeare’s female characters over the course of five acts, to show his developing understanding of women. The *New York Times* reviewer Ben Brantley said of the acting by Packer and costar Nigel Gore in the New York production, “It’s not just poetry in motion, it’s thought made flesh.”

BASED ON PACKER’S STATURE as a Shakespearean pioneer, Boston College associate professor of theater and then-department chair Scott Cummings saw her as a natural for the Monan Professorship, which was founded in 2007 with a gift from Joyce Robsham in honor of the University’s Chancellor and former President J. Donald Monan, SJ, to bring a visiting theater practitioner to campus each year. Past Monan professors have included Paul Daigneault ’87, founder and producing artistic director of SpeakEasy Stage Company in Boston; the performance artist and playwright Robbie McCauley; and the innovative puppeteer John Bell. “It’s a chance for students to work with accomplished professionals who have active and—in some cases like Tina’s—stellar careers,” says Cummings.

Cummings proposed that Packer bring a version of *Women of Will* to campus, to work with students on the material she explores in the performance. But Packer had another idea. In considering the women of Shakespeare, she had become interested in their relationship to men—in particular, in women’s attempts to counteract the violent impulses of male characters. That got her thinking more deeply about the nature of violence in Shakespeare’s plays, which runs like a current through the histories and tragedies.

“Shakespeare never went to war, so I began to think where did these ideas come from?” says Packer. The question had resonance for Packer in the present day, when assaults, shootings, and domestic abuse are fixtures on television. “I think violence is the question of our age,” she says. “In Shakespeare’s time, you saw violence around you, but it didn’t come into your living room. I wanted to see if I could do a project in which Shakespeare gives me some insight

1. Adriana Castanos ’17 (foreground), Amanda Melvin ’17, and classmates perform a “paranoia” exercise during “Theater Skills: Stage Combat,” cotaught by Doug Seldin (center). 2. A class discussion before rehearsal. 3. Matt Con-salvo ’15, as Lord Capulet, and Michaela Dolishny ’17, as Tybalt, rehearse the masked ball scene in *Romeo and Juliet*. 4. Packer works with Quaes and Meade as assistant director Patricia Riggan looks on.





into why people commit acts of violence.” Packer chose four plays—two about war, *Coriolanus* and *Henry IV, Part One*; one about domestic violence, *Romeo and Juliet*; and one, *Othello*, that combines both. As she worked within them, she found a common root: shame. “What [Shakespeare] basically says is that we shame people and make them less-than,” says Packer. “For men, it often feels like they can only equalize that by killing someone.” Thus, for example, Iago feels shame over being passed over for military advancement—and responds by causing Othello to kill not only himself, but his wife as well.

To further drive home the point to students, Packer brought in her son, Jason Asprey, an accomplished actor (the title role in *Hamlet*, Antony in *Julius Caesar*, both at Shakespeare & Company) and a teacher in his own right, to lead a class on stage combat. “My method is not just about learning fighting moves—it’s about what the cost of violence is—what it’s like to hurt someone, and what it’s like to be hurt,” says Asprey. In a recent class, students swung realistic-looking metal broadswords and rapiers in moves that Asprey refers to as “physical lines of dialogue”—representing the relationships of characters to each other.

Rather than plan the action in advance, Asprey works with individual actors to arrive at their moves—deciding whether, for example, they are going to slap or punch a person. “What’s the story you are trying to tell?” presses Asprey. “If you are trying to shame the person it’s a slap. Even a punch can be different depending on whether it’s a surprise jab or a heroic punch where the person can see it coming.”

As students swing their swords around in a seeming pandemonium of violence, there is more smiling than groaning at first; their yoga pants and shorts seem out of place with the deadly-looking weapons and clash of steel on steel. The longer they go on, the more realistic their motions become as they start inhabiting their characters, grunting and delivering vicious slashes across the back or brutal bashes in the face with the butt of a sword, only to return to smiling and helping each other up after they are done.

Coming physically close to violence gives students a deeper appreciation for the roots of violence. “I’ve realized how much the cycle of honor and shame is really present in so many human behaviors and situations,” says Mass. “We may call it dignity, or respect, or pride, but you think about it in those terms, you get access to a primitive, deeply rooted human feeling.” Packer extends the thought: “When you are an actor you need authenticity. You are not pretending

or putting on something. You are stripping things off and revealing more about who you are.”

In addition to Shakespeare’s plays, the students have been reading books about violence including *On Killing*, by lieutenant colonel David Grossman; and *Violence* by James Gilligan, a psychiatrist who worked in maximum security prisons. Discussing the topic in class, students have made connections to contemporary issues, whether the national indignation around domestic violence that erupted in the fall after professional football player Ray Rice was seen on tape beating his girlfriend in an elevator, or the cycles of shame that drive terrorism in the Middle East. “In one of my other classes [an international studies course, taught by David Hollenbach, SJ], we did a section on war and genocide,” says Matt Appleby ’15, “and the next day I walk into Shakespeare and we are talking about the same thing.”

While the themes of violence aren’t necessarily applicable to his campus life, Appleby says Packer’s insistence on viscerally inhabiting Shakespeare’s words has affected him daily. “She said something about how, ‘by not letting your breath in, you will live your whole life in the shallows,’” he recalls. The words stuck with him. “You can get so much out of this in terms of your own life, about being open and vulnerable and connected. I feel at the end of class, I walk out with a different sense of myself.”

Packer says she doesn’t know what she will do with the script when the experience is over—whether she will develop it as a sort of *Men of Will* project, or just use the experience to inform her teaching and performing. But wrestling with these themes for the past few months has been a reminder of what excites her about working with Shakespeare, as a collaborator of sorts, for four decades and across 400 years.

“He’s a lot cleverer than me,” says Packer, who is constantly discovering new meaning in his words. While writing a companion book to *Women of Will*, for example, she came across a line from *The Tempest* spoken by the magician Prospero: “Graves at my command, have wak’d their sleepers; oped and let them forth.” She realized that Shakespeare was using the image as a metaphor for the creative process. “I’d been hearing this line for 20 or 30 years, and suddenly it means something else to me,” Packer says.

“Shakespeare’s creativity is dependent on other people being creative,” she continues, “because otherwise the plays are stillborn. They are boring if you just read them behind the desk, which is why the kids go crazy. They demand other people to make them live.” As for what she hopes students in her class will get out of Shakespeare, she answers with a single word: “Life.” ■

Michael Blanding is the author of *The Map Thief* (2014).

1. Asprey (right) demonstrates to Ryan Cooper ’16 and Meghan Hornblower ’17 a close-combat “parrot punch,” in which one actor imagines striking a parrot perched atop the other’s shoulder. 2. A group breathing exercise at the end of a “Stage Combat” class. 3. Asprey reviews dialogue with Consalvo. 4. Quas (in purple shorts), Melvin (far right), and classmates rehearse a fight sequence.



“Battle Plans,” a video of Jason Asprey’s “Theater Skills: Stage Combat” class, may be viewed via Full Story, at bc.edu/bcm.

Last rites

A SUMMER DAY IN ROOIBOK

A LINE OF SMALL, DARK, RECTANGULAR SHAPES, SOME WITH SMALLER SHAPES INSIDE THEM, SPACED OUT ALONG A HORIZONTAL LINE.

BY MAGGIE MESSITT '01

*"I moved to South Africa with a one-way ticket in 2003, less than a decade after the end of apartheid and South Africa's first democratic election. The next one-way ticket wouldn't come for eight years." So writes the author at the beginning of her new nonfiction book, *The Rainy Season*. Messitt embedded herself in the northeast, among the 200 or so Sotho, Shangaan, and Mozambican Tsonga families in the community of Rooibok, on the African side of the "line that once legally separated white and black." Her book is an account of life in Rooibok through the experiences of three residents interviewed extensively: Thoko Makwakwa, a middle-aged healer; Dankie Mathebula, a young man educated under democracy; and Regina Hlabane, a weaver of tapestries in her sixties, devoutly Catholic.*

Thoko

"It is very bad to commit suicide," said a woman beside Thoko.

Six middle-aged women and one young man were packed tightly in the back of an enclosed short-wheelbase truck, the final vehicle in a procession of six bound for Mbangi Maduzu Mathebula's funeral. A small square box, the truck had four pull-down seats and scarcely room for knees to knock and heads to skim the ceiling. Two small sliding windows in the hold let in barely enough air to breathe, as useful as the holes children poke into tin cans with a fork when they've caught a butterfly or millipede.

Thoko, like the others, was wearing her finest: a long red dress that hung on her thin, curveless body; a generously sized zebra-print jacket draped over her shoulders; and a wide-brimmed straw hat with a plaid sash tied around its neck, covering her short, untidy hair. An elastic ribbon held the hat in place, cutting a distinct line across the back of her jaw and beneath her chin, preserving itself in her dark, sun-drenched complexion.

From the moment they climbed in, the women had spoken over one another, at one another, and to those who weren't even listening. They were yelling. It was different from the yelling they do at home when a young person has done something wrong, or to call someone to fetch something they would rather not get up and fetch themselves. It was the yelling that took place in casual conversation, a yelling used when you're talking to your neighbor across the road, when you're in a store and your friend is a few aisles over, and, in this case, when there are several of you talk-



ing about something very important. It was a conversation turned up to painful decibels.

Thoko had been riding in the final *bakkie* (pickup truck) of the procession before spotting the empty truck that her nephews Dankie and Jack were climbing inside. Her body had been squeezed like the folds of an accordion into the bed of the metallic-green lowrider with more than a dozen others. At the sight of an open space, she pulled her body up, unfolded her limbs, and leapt from the open vehicle. With her followed five others.

The women continued their conversation as they scrambled into the new vehicle.

"He should have killed his wife first, if he was going to commit suicide," said Thoko in a considered, yet uncomplicated, tone. "You just can't commit suicide and leave a wife, stealing away the good life."

"He should have explained to someone, if he had a problem. Not deciding to take his own life," a second woman chimed in over Thoko.

"She couldn't even attend the funeral," said another.

"No. She can't come. She's still frightened," Thoko said. "It'll take her some time to see other people, because she knows what she has done is wrong."

The women mulled over the idea of suicide and their recollections of suicide in the past. One woman remembered a man in the nearby village of Thulamahashe who had "committed himself out of this world" and into another, but—of course—the reason behind his death was debatable.

Thoko's nephew Dankie, the youngest of her elder sister, was sitting in the passenger seat up front with his window rolled down and the wind in his face. He said nothing. His eyes were fastened to the dusty dashboard, and his mind was in another place. He was the one who had found Maduzu. He was the one who cut him free from the rope.

He heard the women in the back seat *skimming* (gossiping), but he preferred not to listen, not to digest. He preferred to wish it all away. Wish it out the window and into the wind, to float out of the car, out of Rooibok, beyond Acornhoek, over the mountains, and into a place he would never have to see.

He turned to his right and all the way around to face his brother, his aunt, and the tangled bodies behind him, acknowledging their presence only once.

The commotion of voices seemed to bother Dankie at first. But the women's conversation eventually blended into one great static over which his thoughts and non-thoughts meandered.

There are five turns between the Mathebula homestead and the funeral home: left, left, left, right, left. Eastward away from the mountains. Northwest past the roads to Thoko's house and *shebeen* (backdoor illegal pub). North away from Rooibok A, past the road to Moholoholo High

OPPOSITE: The soccer field in Rooibok bordered by a fabric fence, 2007.

The caravan of cars crept toward a dead end, with the option to go straight into Tintswalo Hospital's emergency entrance or left into the Elite Funeral Parlor parking lot. Elite sat along the tracks, invisible to the road but with higher foot traffic than the local market.

School, past the mission's entrance, and parallel to the escarpment painting the skyline of the lowveld. Westward once the dirt road met the only tar road in Acornhoek on which you pass through town, past the open market butcher, past the Spar and Buzi Cash and Carry, past the Indian shop, and past the police station. North again toward a dead end, and then one final westward turn.

And with each turn, seven bodies shifted.

Thoko's back was up against the right side of the truck's interior, and she sat crammed between two women and the driver's seat. The side window behind her was open as far as possible, but the rear window's inability even to crack created a simmer of suffocating heat, the breath of seven adults in close proximity and the warmth of seven bodies dressed in long sleeves, long skirts, wraps, and formal jackets.

Turning right off the main tar road and down a short, steep driveway, the caravan of cars slowly crept toward a dead end, with the option to go straight over the railroad tracks into Tintswalo Hospital's emergency entrance or left into the Elite Funeral Parlor parking lot. Elite, locally pronounced as "e-light" (as in the light of God), sat at the base of a hill and along the tracks, invisible to the road but with higher foot traffic than the local market and government grants' line.

The procession turned left into the parking lot. Other than the road signs directing vehicles to Elite—one of seven parlors within a three-kilometer stretch—there was no exterior sign to be seen.

The sound of voices suddenly burst above a gray cement brick wall at the edge of the lot and filled the air, halting the conversations inside the vehicles. The sounds of claps echoed like drums and kept up a beat, the rhythm solemn but laced with life.

A green hearse pulled through the front gates of Elite, from the confines of the compound's gray walls and into the gravel parking lot. Walking on either side of the vehicle were three people, six in total, only one of whom was male. Each was dressed in a long white cotton gown, the uniform of the Nazareth Baptist Church. The six mourners left the side of the hearse and climbed onto the back of an eight-wheel flat-

bed truck parked parallel to the wall. They sat there as they would sit beneath a tree on a hot summer day, legs swept to the side, grass mats protecting their clean gowns. All of this without missing a beat, without slowing the pace, without lowering their harmony.

Thoko looked out the little truck's open back door and reached for Jack. His right hand stretched out from the sleeve of his thick leather jacket and helped her balance while she jumped from the vehicle and gained her footing below. She landed holding the top of her straw hat, straightened herself up, and began to brush her dress clean and straight.

A line of "cars that carry the coffin" was parked along the right interior wall of the funeral parlor compound, a wall with an exterior lined by tall pine trees used by local farmers as natural fence lines, protecting their crops from strong winds. Each vehicle's front windshield had Elite Funeral Parlor detailed in white script across its top quarter.

In the center of the cement-walled compound stood a smoky blue, windowless building with a set of large double doors standing wide open. "Elite Funeral Parlor, Open 24 Hours" was painted in large purple lettering above the entrance. Opposite, along the front wall of the compound, were two large, blue, wall-less tents held up by thin metal poles. Underneath were several dozen green plastic chairs, in tidy rows of 12.

Each tent represented one viewing. Friends and family of Thoko's elder sister's husband's nephew Mbangu Maduzu Mathebula filled the first tent. Opposite it, against the front wall and to the right of the building's open double doors, were two rows of green plastic chairs. Traditionally, these are for immediate family members only: brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, children, and, sometimes, close cousins or in-laws. Several women, dressed in large draping scarves, and long, ankle-length skirts, and a few men in secondhand tweed jackets and pressed button-down shirts filled the seats against the wall. Thoko took a seat third from the right, beside Maduzu's elderly mother and his sister, Joyce. Thoko's nephews took two seats beneath the tent.

The second tent stood empty, but a few people began filtering in to occupy its seats, gain refuge from the summer sun, and wait their turn. The row of family chairs opposite was nearly filled, and those sitting there were being served ice-cold water by two women with trays of plastic cups.

Maduzu's sister and brother silently signaled to Dankie to join them against the building, but he remained beside his brother. To their left sat a thin gangly man who wore a red, green, and yellow beaded necklace of multiple strands nearly a fistful in width. He had a large, knee-high silver drum, like a bass drum used in a marching band. Its strap was slightly torn and weathered, and the bulbous end of his white drumstick looked worn down from use.

Mbangu Mathebula, known more commonly as Maduzu, wasn't Christian like most of his family members. He didn't go to church, and only a few people recall ever seeing him read the Bible. He was what some might describe as a traditionalist; others might call him a Muchongolo dancer. Translated from Tsonga, *muchongolo* simply means "dance session." It is held on Sundays, which means if you are a Muchongolo dancer you don't attend church. It isn't a religion per se, but it is definitely associated with strong spiritual and moral beliefs and connecting with the ancestors; its people follow the old generation's customs, their ways of dancing, their sharing of traditional beer.

Just inside Elite's front entrance, a man appeared. He cleared his throat and shouted, "Mathebula. Rooibok."

Dankie

Dankie hesitated and slowly lifted himself from his seat. The strong posture that normally framed his back was missing. His shoulders curved forward, following his eyes, trailing his toes. Dankie could hear the echoing cries of Maduzu's sister and mother.

He shuffled around the left of the building, along the tall gray wall, around a car parked outside an open door, and behind the crowd of community members waiting to enter the viewing parlor.

Nearly everyone had passed through the room, and his brother, Jack, exited just as he contemplated entering. Pushed into position by the brother of Maduzu, Dankie fell third to last in line.

The room was dark. And very small. In the center, on a metal stand with wheels, sat a long coffin made of grey-and-white-grained, plastic-coated wood. It was narrow—so narrow, it was hard to imagine a man of Maduzu's size could be laid to rest in such confines. It had sharp, abrupt points at the shoulders, much like those raw-wood coffins constructed with as few pieces as possible.

People were crowded around the coffin, allowing just enough room for those still viewing to walk the pathway from left to right, around Maduzu. What space remained was filled by the sound of slow lyrics, lapping like waves in the Indian Ocean, led by one woman, "*Alleluiaaaaaaaaaa, Alleluiaaaaaaaaaa . . .*"

God appeaaaaaaad

God has just appeared

Deeeescendingggggg

Descending through the clouds

Dankie walked slowly along the edge of the coffin past the waist and to the shoulders, where his eyes looked away

from the gray-and-white exterior and into the coffin's only window. The triangular opening revealed the face of an older man with round, strong features. A small stream of light let in by the open doors ran across his face, unveiling his lifeless Necco-colored skin. It looked almost like putty or clay, shined, then powdered—a process that brought out each line in his face and the crow's-feet along his eyes.

Dankie couldn't see whether Maduzu was wearing traditional Muchongolo clothing or a suit and tie, as his Christian relatives would have preferred. He couldn't see if there was a Bible inside, something Dankie believed all people should be buried with. He couldn't see Maduzu's neck or shoulders. A sheet of thin, white butcher paper was secured to the walls of the coffin's open hatch. Dankie couldn't see Maduzu's ears, the top of his head, or his neck through the narrow opening, only his strong chin and face—like the portals at a carnival that allow you to place your head through and take on the body of another person or animal.

The line of viewers flowed with the music, but Dankie slowed as much as he could. As he curved around the top half of his cousin's coffin, he stood between Maduzu and a podium on which a Bible lay. Peering down, looking at Maduzu from above, looking at Maduzu upside down and slowly becoming right-side up, he continued to walk, the gap between him and the woman in front of him widening with each step. As he reached Maduzu's left shoulder, Dankie turned his body to stop, but didn't. He decided to circle around once again. And he almost did. But his mother pulled him out the door and into the light.

On the left side of the room, Maduzu's male relatives and several men of Muchongolo were already unfolding a king-size, soft wool blanket with a red, yellow, black, and green pattern. The line had passed, and they were preparing to take Maduzu home.

Dankie stood outside with his back to the viewing room. Facing the grey wall and line of tall trees, he let go. His shoulders shook. His face was buried inside his hands. Tears poured through his fingers and down one wrist.

He stood alone. Several feet away, circling around the green hatchback hearse, people sang and waited for the preacher to speak. An odd orchestra rose up, a blend of slow lyrics about God's followers, the lung-filled cries of Joyce and her mother, a bird's repeated call ("pit-may-fro"), and the beeping of the hearse's open door.

"*Thank you very much for giving me this chance to speak to you, and I thank you all for coming to Maduzu's funeral. I am going to read to you from the Bible,*" announced the preacher, standing beside the open hearse door. Dankie wiped his hands across his face to sweep away the sadness and dry away his tears. He rubbed with such force and so repetitively that it seemed as if he wished to wipe away his face altogether.



"Thank you, God," the preacher continued, "for giving us this chance to speak to you. Now we have to take our friend to the cemetery. Please be with us through to the cemetery. Amen."

"Amen," the crowd replied.

As quickly as tongues released the last syllable, one of the women began to lead the Zulu lyrics that would carry Maduzu through the compound of Elite and to the procession on the road.

Follow

Follow him wherever he goes.

Wherever he is

We will follow him.

Dankie watched the blanket-shrouded coffin until the hearse door was shut. When the engine started and the vehicle began to creep slowly along the side of the building, he followed as the singers surrounded the hearse and walked Maduzu between the rows of mourners waiting their turn to join the cortège. It wasn't long before their sweet melody was suffocated by the harsh Muchongolo drum.

dong, dong dong, dong

dong, dong dong, dong

The vibration of the drum seeped through the pores of the mourners, forced its way into the bloodstream, and shook the beat of their hearts. Of the singers, only the sight of their song could be seen—as if they were moving their lips, but nothing came forth. Even they could hardly hear their own voices, which collectively could not break through the Muchongolo drum.

Less than 10 minutes after the viewing, Dankie climbed into the front seat of the little square truck. His aunt Thoko—whose tall, bony frame reached the ceiling—sat behind the driver's seat, with her chin resting on top of the headrest, and stared out the window.

As they drove through town, the sounds of Friday afternoon filled the vehicle. A long cargo container, the kind loaded onto semi trucks, had been offloaded on the north side of the main shopping strip, brought in by a regional radio station. Its sides were embedded with speakers, and Acornhoek's busy drag was filled with the sounds of pop dance music and disc jockeys. One end of the container sat open, with people standing about in traditional dress. Near the edge of the road stood a barefoot, shirtless man with rings of faux leopard tails around his neck and a short cloth of leopard skin around his waist.

In the truck, the women who had chattered on about getting cool drinks when they first passed through, who had waved to friends at the two stop signs just 20 minutes before, now sat and stared past one another's shoulders.

Dankie sat in silence. His eyes were closed.

The sun was falling when the lead vehicle—a bakkie filled with Muchongolo men and women, one of whom still maintained the beat of the drum—slowed to turn onto the

dirty road bound for Rooibok. The children who filled the roads as Maduzu's mourners first passed were now inside their homes, or sitting under trees in small numbers, or meandering along the roadside with no place to go. Just a few children were left on the soccer field, no longer playing against one another, but lazily lying on the dusty field, propped up by their stringy arms or leaning back with their heads on the ground.

The escarpment that paints the sky like a city in the distance radiated. A deep line of bright pink laced the edges of its rocky, defined features. A palate of African oranges and pinks splashed across the sky. The shadow of the great mountain tabletop slowly covered the speckle of homes seen across the lowlands, stretching its way to the flats of Rooibok.

As the procession creaked along the eroded roads leading past Dankie's home to Maduzu's homestead, Dankie began to rock his head—not enough for most to notice, but a small nervous beat slowly tapping forward. Maduzu's home was located on the slow slope of Rooibok's west side, a short walk from the natural spring where cattle drank, gardens were grown, and community members collected water when the taps ran dry. It faced the mountains with a view unobstructed by any other homesteads, and had no direct neighbors with whom to share a fenceline like the homesteads closer to the main road. The property was larger than others and looked like a collection of three or possibly four plots appointed to Maduzu and rented from the tribal authority. A link fence, wooden poles, and the occasional sheet metal or collection of sticks bordered the outline. The entrance was wide enough to drive through.

As the vehicles rode the curve of the road to the left, a large blue-and-white tent towering at the rear of Maduzu's home came into sight. Cars in the front of the line had begun to park and unload, and their passengers were entering the property on foot. The green hearse slid in, maneuvering through the crowd.

The rear door of the hearse opened, and the men of Muchongolo reached in with the help of two Elite drivers to pull the coffin of their friend from its interior. Hidden beneath the soft drape of the wool blanket, the coffin was lifted to shoulder height and carried around the side of the hearse, up the single step, onto the cement stoop, and through the front door of Maduzu's home. Immediate family and a few Muchongolo men followed closely.

Dankie, still separating himself from the crowd, just a few body lengths behind, heard the ululation of Joyce, Maduzu's sister, leaping from her body into the air like a call for help to the ancestors. Turning to the left, he saw her throw her body flat against the ground, tipping like a signpost. She didn't even buckle. She gripped the sandy soil, her body, covered in black cloth, quivering as she cried. Two women, Joyce's

friends from her home village, ran to her side and pulled her up by the arms. They carried her around Maduzu's home to the rear, away from the crowds.

"Come," said Jack.

"No," Dankie replied.

"Come," Jack insisted, holding his brother's arm.

Dankie stepped around the crowds, past the hearse, and through the closed-in stoop to enter Maduzu's home for the first time in seven days. Inside, every curtain was drawn. A step behind his brother, Dankie stopped in the center of the kitchen, beside the Muchongolo man holding the oversized silver drum.

Each side of the main room—a kitchen and living room—had two wooden doors leading to small rooms. The doors were closed with the exception of the first room to the right. Inside, Maduzu was carried and placed on his bed to rest. Family members followed, filling the room and leaving little space for movement or light to break through.

Dankie turned around to look at the kitchen. The drum began to bang. It filled the small room—a room in which Dankie wished to never walk again—with violent force. An older man, the brother of Maduzu, left the bedroom door's entrance and signaled to the drummer, pushing his hands downward as if waving away the chords of Muchongolo. Stop, he was trying to say. Stop. Another elderly man joined him in motioning away the beat. The drum eventually quieted, and the drummer walked out.

Dankie took a few steps closer to Maduzu's room to hear the preacher speaking, but as his view of the room's interior became clearer he turned around and walked away. Inside the room, above the heads of too many people, hung the rope from which his cousin had hanged himself. Serrated in the effort to save, the rope attached to the roof's wooden beams hadn't been pulled down. It was a candid way of telling the tale; the remnants of the rope that pulled the breath of life from Maduzu's body.

Regina

Maduzu was buried in the community cemetery near the mission. Regina's late husband also made this journey in the arms of others, the coffin traveling from place to place until he was finally laid to rest. The evening after Regina buried her husband, 10 women had remained in her home, each of them a widow. As they surrounded her, stayed in her room into the night, Regina was unable to sleep. She knew that they were there to take her, but she knew no more than that. Restlessly, she lay in her bed waiting—anxious of what might be to come and unsure whether to be filled with fear or, since the



women around here were all Christian in heart, to be filled with calm. She waited until the women told her, "*It is time.*"

There was a full moon that night. The women walked in silence by the light of the moon and the Southern Cross above, walking down the dirt roads and passing houses of friends and neighbors. They walked and walked, and, finally, several kilometers away, they arrived at the Nwandlamare River: a place where women fetch water, where their mothers were traditionally courted, vital to the livelihood of each and every villager.

It is at this place that traditions begin and the story often ends.

"They took me to the river, and in the river they gave me laws and some other things. I am not allowed to tell you more than the laws they have given me," explained Regina. It is a mystery to every woman, one solved only at the death of her husband.

Although Regina showed no fear, Emerencia, her daughter, had been terrified. Every young woman hears rumors about what happens to the widows down by the river. She had heard that the women are put into the cold water and struck repeatedly. She was afraid that the other widows would beat her mother. She had also heard whispers about the women being cut with scissors on their bodies. But nothing she had ever heard could be confirmed. The widows return home, every time, with a new set of black clothing and a haircut cropped close to the scalp. Regina wouldn't share beyond what she'd been permitted.

The laws presented to her governed her actions for the following six months—simple laws, but crucial for the widowed Shangaan. Regina was not allowed to look in any direction other than forward. There was no looking to her right, no looking to her left, and no looking back. She was not allowed to raise her voice above a soft and respectful tone. Nor was she allowed to walk without her hands behind her back or crossed over her chest. Regina, for the next six months, would honor her husband—a man who had abandoned her and her children many years earlier—with these rules of obedience.

Regina arrived where Emerencia waited with tearful eyes. "I was wearing a black dress, black shoes, black jersey, and a black fabric to cover my shoulders," she recalled, "and a rosary." ■

An independent narrative and immersion journalist, Maggie Messitt '01 lived and worked in northeast South Africa from 2003 to 2011. During this time, she founded a writing school for rural African women, edited a community newspaper and literary magazine, and reported across southern Africa. She is currently a doctoral student in creative nonfiction at Ohio University. Her essay is drawn and adapted with permission from her forthcoming book *The Rainy Season: Three Lives in the New South Africa*, published by the University of Iowa Press (© 2015 by the University of Iowa Press). All rights reserved. The book may be ordered at a discount from the Boston College Bookstore via bc.edu/bcm.

C21 Notes

CONTENTS

40 'Wake up'

In Latin American faith tradition, the vanquished stay strong

42 Gulf wars

Media vs. orthodoxy vs. progressives vs. politicians vs. indifference

'Wake up'

By Roberto S. Goizueta

In Latin American faith tradition, the vanquished stay strong

THE NARRATIVE REENACTED IN the fiesta of Our Lady of Guadalupe is based on the *Nican Mopohua*, a text dating from the 1560s and written in Nahuatl, the language of the indigenous Nahua people. The events are said to have taken place in 1531—that is, a decade after the Spaniards all but demolished the indigenous city they found and were constructing Mexico City. It is an account unlike that of any other Marian apparition.

The first character who appears in the story is an Indian named Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin. The terms used to describe him suggest he is quite poor, though honorable. As an indigenous man under Spanish colonial rule, Juan Diego is on his way to the bishop's palace in Mexico City/Tlatelolco to receive instruction in the Christian faith. While traversing the hilly countryside, he hears the sound of many birds singing. So beautiful is the music that he imagines he must be in paradise. He cannot help himself; he must find the source, even if it means his trip to the bish-

op's palace is delayed. As he reaches a hill called Tepeyac, he hears another beautiful sound, a soft human voice calling out to him in his native tongue: "*Quihuah; Iuantzin Iuan Diegotzin*" (roughly, "My dearest, most beloved and dignified Juan Diego").

Knowing Tepeyac to be a sacred mountain, "the site where the goddess virgin-mother of the gods [*Tonantzin*] was venerated," as the Nahua text relates, Juan Diego proceeds to the top of the hill, where he comes face to face with a woman clothed in raiment of blinding brilliance: "He marveled at her perfect beauty. Her clothing appeared like the sun, and it gave forth rays." The woman identifies herself at the Virgin Mary: "Know and rest assured in your heart, my dearest child, that I am the Ever Virgin Mary, Mother of the God of Great Truth, *Téotl*, of Him by Whom we live, of the Creator of Persons, of the Master of what is Close and Together, of the Lord of Heaven and Earth." She is the Mother of both the Christian God and the Nahua *Téotl*. After



Marking the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe with roses before her image, at the School of Theology and Ministry Chapel on December 12, 2014.

Juan Diego informs her that he is on the road to the bishop's palace (in his words, "her house") to receive religious instruction, the Virgin commands him to tell the bishop to construct a temple on Tepeyac, from where she can extend her love and protection to all her people. *This*, she insists, would be her house.

Arriving at the episcopal seat of Tlatelolco, Juan Diego delivers his message to the bishop, Juan de Zumárraga, who turns him away. Since he is a mere Indian, Juan Diego is not surprised by the bishop's rejection; he gives his report to the Virgin, entreating her to please send someone else on the important mission, someone more worthy of the bishop's attention: "Because, for sure, I am a meager peasant, a cord, a little ladder, the people's excrement, I am a leaf." The Virgin not only spurs his request and self-deprecating language but, even more insistently, commands him to make a second attempt at delivering her message to the bishop. Finally acquiescing, Juan Diego returns

to the bishop's palace, whereupon he is granted an audience but, once again, is dismissed. This time, however, the bishop makes an offer: Bring me a sign that what you are saying is true, he tells Juan Diego, and I will believe you. Juan Diego reports this to the Virgin, who now tells him to go home for the evening and return to Tepeyac in the morning, at which time she will give him a sign to take to the bishop.

The next morning, however, Juan Diego decides not to go to Tepeyac, as his uncle, Juan Bernardino, has become extremely ill and is dying. The nephew will go to Tlatelolco, but on a quite different mission, in search of a priest who can come and minister to his uncle. On the way, however, Juan Diego is intercepted by the Virgin, who asks him why he skipped their appointment on Tepeyac. Sheepishly, he gives his explanation. Telling him not to worry, the Virgin chides Juan Diego for not trusting in her love and protection, and she assures him that Juan Bernardino will recover from his illness.

Now confident and at peace, Juan Diego asks the Virgin for a sign to take to the bishop. She directs him to climb to the top of a nearby hill and bring to her the roses he finds growing there. Juan Diego is incredulous, since that particular hill is known for its barren, rocky topography. Moreover, roses do not bloom at this time of year. Nevertheless, he does as she asks and indeed finds beautiful roses, which he cuts, carefully places in his *tilma* (cloak), and brings to her. These flowers are the sign that Juan Diego will take to the bishop to convince him to build a temple on Tepeyac. He returns to the bishop's palace and, when he is ushered in, he opens his *tilma* and the flowers cascade to the floor. On the *tilma* itself appears a detailed, brightly colored image of the Virgin. The bishop is converted and orders the construction of the temple on Tepeyac.

Throughout the Americas, this story is reenacted annually (often during a Mass) on December 12, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The celebrations, gener-

ally beginning the evening before, involve plenty of music and dancing, with the community (usually led by mariachis) serenading the Virgin with the traditional song "Las Mañanitas." Also sung traditionally at birthdays, the lyrics of "Las Mañanitas" celebrate the birth of a new day with the words "Wake up my dear, wake up": *The day you were born all the flowers were born / And in the baptismal font sang the nightingales.*

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT THE narrative of Our Lady of Guadalupe is set in 1531, at a time of great despair for the indigenous peoples of Mexico. In the first part of the Guadalupean drama, Juan Diego's words reflect the self-deprecation of a downtrodden, vanquished people: "For sure, I am a meager peasant, a cord, a little ladder, the people's excrement, I am a leaf." As an indigenous man, Juan Diego internalized the belittling, dehumanizing image of the Amerindians promulgated by the Spaniards; like so many oppressed persons, he had learned self-hatred. He saw himself as literally a no-body: a tool with no value beyond his use as an object for others. The contemporary Latino community enacting the drama is well aware of that history, for Latinos have relived it repeatedly over the subsequent five centuries—whether in the 19th century, when the United States annexed almost half of Mexico, or in more recent decades, when the U.S.–Mexican border has become an instrument of exclusion and violence.

Into that despair erupts an utterly unanticipated figure, the Lady of Tepeyac. The Indian who is nobody is confronted by the Lady who identifies herself as the Mother of God, and calls Juan Diego her "dearest." The tables have now been turned; the Indian subjugated by the Spanish is singled out as the most beloved child of the Virgin and, hence, of God. Moreover, the Virgin orders Juan Diego to tell the bishop to build a chapel to her—not in the capital city, where the Spaniards reside, but on the hill where the mother goddess of the Nahuas lives. The Virgin reveals a God whose preferred residence is among the vanquished, on the outskirts of the centers of power and influence.

The drama of Guadalupe establishes God's preferential solidarity with the poor

as the very source of Mexican identity, for it was the encounter between the Virgin and Juan Diego that made possible the emergence of the Mexican nation from defeat and despair. And the God who, through the Lady of Tepeyac, transforms Juan Diego from a mere "leaf" into a "dearest child" continues to do so for all those communities that today retell and reenact this sacred drama. Through such recounting, the narrative makes credible and palpable for the Mexican people—and all Latin Americans—the Christian narrative of the Resurrection, in which the crucified Innocent Victim is justified and raised from the dead at the very moment when he seemed abandoned by God. This is no longer merely a doctrine or dogma learned from the Spanish bishop and his successors, but a reality at the heart of Mexican experience.

What is particularly significant—and subversive—about God's special love for and presence among the residents of Tepeyac, on the city's margins, is the expressly theological significance of that preference. That is, the Virgin does not simply declare her love for Juan Diego (a noteworthy action in any case); she "deputizes" him as her messenger—and not just any messenger, but her messenger to the Spanish bishop. It is the bishop who is in need of conversion. "At Tepeyac," notes Fr. Virgilio Elizondo, who teaches theology at the University of Notre Dame, "Juan Diego functions as the priest."

And—truly subversive—it is the rela-

tionship, or *interaction*, between the Lady and Juan Diego that drives the drama forward. Their interaction results in the gradual transformation of Juan Diego from an object of others' actions into an empowered agent able not only to engage and command the Spanish bishop but even to disobey the Lady (as when he opts to skip his appointment with her). Initially agreeing to the Virgin's requests out of deference, Juan Diego, by their third meeting, is eager to confront the bishop, pleading "very much with her to send him immediately to see the Lord of the priests to take him her sign," an agent of historical action rather than the object.

As modern-day participants in the Guadalupean fiesta are drawn into this drama, they are introduced to its liberating power. They are invited to interact with the Virgin, the bishop, and, ultimately, the God who is being made present. What the community is invited to participate in is the birth of a person as *somebody*, empowered and constituted by a relationship with *La Morenita*, the dark-skinned Lady. ■

Roberto S. Goizueta is Boston College's Flatley Professor of Catholic Theology and the author of *Christ Our Companion: Toward a Theological Aesthetics of Liberation* (2009). His essay is drawn and adapted by permission of Paulist Press from a chapter he contributed to *Invitation to Practical Theology: Catholic Voices and Visions* (copyright © 2014, Paulist Press), edited by Claire E. Wolfteich. Passages from the *Nican Mopohua* were translated by Fr. Virgilio Elizondo.

Gulf wars

By William Bole

Media vs. orthodoxy vs. progressives vs. politicians vs. indifference

THREE PROMINENT JOURNALISTS who've made religion their beat met in a Devlin Hall lecture room on October 23 for an early-evening forum titled "Writing about Religion in a Polarized Age." Rod Dreher, senior editor

of the *American Conservative*, a political magazine; Mark Oppenheimer, religion columnist for the *New York Times* and the 2014–15 holder of the Corcoran Visiting Chair in Christian-Jewish Relations at Boston College; and Sarah Posner, senior

correspondent for the independent online journal *Religion Dispatches*, were joined by moderator Alan Wolfe, political scientist and director of the University's Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life, which sponsored the event.

Dreher, a self-described conservative Christian ("orthodox" with a capital "O" in his case; he is a Catholic convert to Eastern Orthodoxy) and the first presenter, wasted no time in getting to the "polarized" aspect of the forum's topic, as he addressed the gulf between conservative Christians and liberal media professionals.

"From a religious perspective, there's probably no issue that's harder [for conservatives] to talk about and harder for liberals to understand than the orthodox point of view on sexuality," said Dreher, who is based in south Louisiana and writes a high-profile blog for the Washington, D.C.-based *American Conservative*. (He did not spell out that view on this occasion but made it clear he was referring to traditional Christian teachings on questions such as homosexuality and marriage. "The divinely sanctioned union of male and female is an icon of the relationship of Christ to His church and ultimately of God to His creation," he blogged in 2013.) Dreher ventured that the vast majority of liberal commentators regard this perspective as "bigotry, straight up," especially when it comes to same-sex marriage. Religious conservatives must "prove from the very beginning that we aren't haters, in order to be listened to," he said.

Dreher attributed this clash to starkly differing approaches to religion. "To the orthodox, religion stands outside of time and culture, and humans have to conform our understanding and behavior to its principles," he said. "To the progressives, religion changes to suit our changing needs and changing times in society. For [progressives] the truth claims of religion are far more malleable than they are for the orthodox."

Oppenheimer took up the "writing" aspect of the event's title. In doing so, he challenged Dreher's assumption that "journalism defaults to secular liberalism" (Oppenheimer's words). The *New York Times* writer allowed that most journalists might well be secular liberals, but he

added, "I think journalism as a practice defaults to a kind of Enlightenment empiricism, which means we're supposed to work from evidence." Reporters, he said, don't or shouldn't accept a religious leader's assertions as gospel truth any more than they would take, on faith, what a politician or athlete says.

According to Oppenheimer, most journalists "bend over backwards with backflips" to neutrally report religious "truth claims" (for example, about whether the Bible forbids sex outside of marriage), to avoid admitting a secular bias. "The problem with coverage of religion is not that it's too critical, but that it's way too soft," he said. Turning to Dreher, who sat immediately to his left, he summed up his case in the most affable tone possible: "If I read you correctly, you're completely wrong." The two men laughed.

Posner, the third presenter, said that writing at the intersection of religion and politics is especially vexing because the two subjects so often overlap and color each other. "I am deeply committed to respecting the religious beliefs of people who make religious claims" about the morality of practices such as abortion and artificial contraception, she said. But, she added, "I'm mindful of how religion may be used by political actors and political elites, or by religious leaders acting in the political sphere, to advance a political agenda."

"You have to give credence to religious claims," Posner said, "but you want to recognize the impact of making those claims on other people who may not share the same religious tradition, or who share the tradition but do not interpret it the same way." She cited Catholics who have no problem with Catholic universities and hospitals including contraception coverage in their healthcare plans, as required under the federal Affordable Care Act, even as the U.S. Catholic bishops strongly oppose any government mandate, in any form.

DURING THE CONVERSATION THAT followed, Posner and Dreher spoke of the need for journalists to foster civil dialogue among their readers and look for common ground on contentious moral issues. Posner mentioned that she constantly

highlights ways of accommodating religious objections to gay marriage (typically involving exemptions for clergy who refuse to perform the ceremonies). Dreher said he works to make his blog "a safe place for readers" to share their values and perspectives, and that often means policing the comments section. Oppenheimer dissented from this concern. He said that, as a reporter, "It's not up to you to find common ground. What's up to you is to write clearly and carefully in a way that tells [readers] true things about an important issue." The *Times* writer also admitted to a "certain lack of interest in what readers think."

The three journalists discussed whether there is a need for more reporting on the theology and basic beliefs of various faiths. Taking the affirmative position were Dreher (who lamented widespread religious illiteracy in the United States) and Posner (who pointed to widespread misconceptions about Islam in particular).

Oppenheimer offered a contrary take, asserting that the general public has little interest in theology. "The shallowness runs deep," he said to laughter. At that point he turned to the audience of roughly 50, including no small representation of young men and women, and asked for a show of hands if theology affects their lives. Hands were raised almost universally. "Okay, not at BC," Oppenheimer conceded. "But most people don't care."

Wolfe interjected, "Do you think you should just be writing about what people want?" Oppenheimer replied that readers shouldn't be "spoon-fed beliefs," either from their own faith or the faiths of others, by journalists.

The Q&A brought several millennials to their feet. A young woman who said she works for the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts asked how to get press coverage of her church's good works (the general advice was to become a steady, reliable source of information for writers). A young man sporting a yellow tie identified himself as a theology teacher at Boston College High School. He said he has found a community among fellow readers of Dreher's blog, a degree of fellowship he has not experienced at his local church. "Sometimes I feel like my parish is online," he said. ■

End Notes

CONTENTS

45 What it took

The politics behind unleaded gas

47 Rooted

A natural and cultural history

49 Dent-de-lion

A poem

From the McMullen Museum

This glass flask from third- or fourth-century Syria is among nearly 200 artifacts in the McMullen Museum's new show, *Roman in the Provinces: Art on the Periphery of Empire*. The exhibition, a collaboration with the Yale University Art Gallery, includes textiles, coins, mosaics, and other everyday objects that reveal "the many different local identities" of the Roman Empire—from Britain to Tunisia—says Gail Hoffman, co-curator and Boston College assistant professor of fine arts and classical studies. Weathering has caused the iridescence on the 3.5-inch bottle. The young man's head (repeated on the reverse side) was mold-blown, a technique developed in Syria in the first century. His exotic appearance, says Hoffman, probably compelled consumers across the empire to think, "this is fancy Syrian perfume." The exhibition runs February 14–May 31.





Green River, Utah, 1987, as the old, leaded gasoline pumps were being retired.

WHAT IT TOOK

By Dr. Philip J. Landrigan '63

The politics behind unleaded gas

PUBLIC HEALTH HAS THREE GOALS. THE FIRST IS TO prevent the spread of disease. That's really how the field got started—controlling epidemics such as cholera, 150 years ago. The second, as some of the big diseases have been knocked down, has been to promote health and well-being. Most recently, the mission has been framed in terms of the prolongation of productive life.

The World Health Organization defines health as “a state of physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity,” and as such the mission of public health today—whether set out by a community, local government, state, or nation—has some key features. It is population-based (which, for me, trained as a pediatrician to care for one patient at a time, has meant realizing that the patient is the community). It emphasizes finding the causes of diseases (and then doing something about them). And it is grounded in biomedicine, while also drawing on the social sciences—on sociology, anthropology, philosophy, theology.

In its basic architecture, public health embodies a preferential

option for the poor. And it is inherently political. You can't do public health and not get dirty with politics. You just can't. That's what makes it fun.

TAKE THE STORY OF UNLEADED GASOLINE. IN THE MID-1970s, in the face of absolutely vicious counterattacks by the lead industry, the petrochemical industry, and the automotive industry, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), where I was working at the time, was able to persuade the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) to take lead out of gasoline. Our goal was to reduce American children's exposure to lead and thus prevent silent brain damage. At the time, Americans were using close to 200,000 tons of lead in gasoline every year (to reduce engine knock), and hundreds of thousands of tons more were being used in other countries around the world. The way the EPA phased out the lead was to say, OK, starting in 1975, each year's new car models are going to have to run lead-free. The estimate was that it would take about 10 years to get all the old cars off the

road, and therefore about 10 years to get lead out of gasoline, and that with these developments would come a decline—albeit a modest one—in blood lead levels in America's children.

In fact, what happened was a massive decline. The blood lead level in American children plummeted in tandem with the reduction of lead in gasoline. And the decline has continued, so that today the average blood lead level in American children is about 1.5 micrograms, down from more than 16 as a national average in 1975. That's a better than 90 percent reduction in blood lead levels over the last four decades.

When I was a resident at Boston Children's Hospital between 1968 and 1970, we used to see kids every year with acute lead poisoning, mostly from lead paint. Acute lead poisoning is almost unheard of today in this country, and most younger pediatricians have never seen the disease because baseline lead exposure is now so much lower. At the same time, we have seen a five-point gain in the U.S. population's mean IQ. Young people are brighter because they grow up with less lead.

There's also been a huge economic return from the phaseout of leaded gas. Joel Schwartz, an epidemiologist at the Harvard School of Public Health, and colleagues at the CDC compute a \$200 billion annual economic benefit to the United States since the mid-1980s through the increased productivity of more intelligent citizens. The outlines of their calculation: We have four million babies born in this country each year. Give them each five additional IQ points, so that's 20 million IQ points gained per year. Economists say that an IQ point is worth about \$10,000 over a lifetime, the fundamental logic being that smarter people are more economically productive. So you multiply 20 million IQ points by \$10,000, and that yields an economic return of \$200 billion—not a one-time bonus but per year, with every annual crop of babies born in this country since the mid-1980s. The cumulative benefit to the economy by the single action of eliminating lead in gasoline is in the trillions of dollars. And this benefit has been repeated in countries worldwide.

In addition to raising intelligence, it is possible that the removal of lead may also have improved children's attention spans and enhanced their executive function, their ability to control impulsivity. The possible consequences are fascinating to think about. Compare the drop in blood lead level with the drop in the murder rate, for instance—allowing for a 20-year lag because it's 20-year-olds who commit murder, not babies—and there's an extraordinarily close parallel between the two. When I first saw these data—

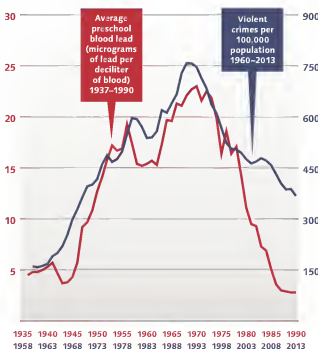
published by Rick Nevin, an economist—I was skeptical. But more recently Amherst College economist Jessica Wolpaw Reyes has repeated Nevin's analysis in a series of countries worldwide and in various jurisdictions in the United States that removed lead at different times, and she has reported similar results.

THERE ARE PEOPLE IN PUBLIC HEALTH AND POLITICAL science who have spent their lives thinking about how to develop strategies to accomplish such significant change. I would say we succeeded in getting lead out of gasoline because, number one, we built partnerships. The partnerships involved people in the medical community, concerned parents, public health officials, and teachers across the country, and their numbers grew over years. We tried many times before 1975 to get lead out of gasoline, and failed. But each year the coalition got bigger and stronger.

Second, we were able to split the opposition. Specifically, what happened was that we took advantage of the passage of the Clean Air Act of 1970. One of the provisions of the Clean Air Act was a requirement that new cars, starting in 1975, contain catalytic converters in their exhaust systems, to reduce a range of toxic emissions. The catalytic converters contained platinum, which of course is very expensive. And what ruins platinum? Lead, which reacts with it. Suddenly, we were able to split the automotive manufacturers off from the petrochemical and lead industries, and reduce the opposition by a third.

Each public health struggle is bound to be different—whether it is the conquest of an emerging disease such as Ebola, or the prevention of a chronic one such as obesity, or the mitigation of stark disparities in the well-being of rich and poor. But all must rely on coalition-building and finding ways to segment the opposition. And all depend on timing. The stars have to align. ■

23-year lag: lead and violence in the U.S.



A pediatrician and epidemiologist, Dr. Philip J. Landrigan '63 is director of the Children's Environmental Health Center at New York City's Mount Sinai Hospital, where he is also the Ethel H. Wise Professor and Chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine. His research while at the CDC in the early 1970s on the effects of lead in children influenced the EPA's decision to eliminate leaded gasoline. Dr. Landrigan's essay is drawn and adapted from a talk he gave at the University's daylong symposium on global public health on December 11, 2014 (see story pg. 12).



Landrigan's presentation may be viewed in its entirety via Full Story, at bc.edu/bcm.



An aerial photograph of Middle Campus from the 1950s shows linden trees sporting the gumbdrop look.

ROOTED

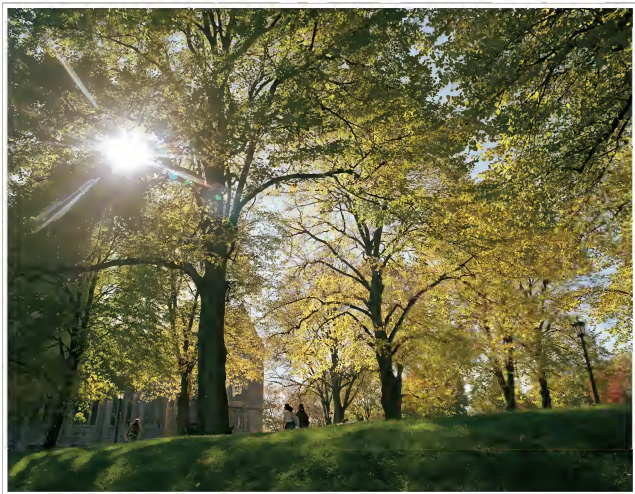
By Samantha Costanzo '15

A natural and cultural history

THE EUROPEAN LITTLELEAF LINDEN TREES (*tilia cordata*) that sentinel the main entry to Boston College and that have long provided that avenue with a resonant name arrived on May 12, 1920, some seven years after the college moved from Boston's South End to Chestnut Hill. The campus then was two structures: the Recitation Building, later called Gasson Hall, and St. Mary's Hall, the Jesuit residence. On what the *Boston Globe* dubbed "Tree Planting Day," hundreds of students and guests watched as the 10-year-old lindens—27 of them—were planted, each one in the name of a campus organization or group. By the end of the day, the saplings represented, among others, the office of the President, the Fulton Debating Society, the *Stylus*, Science, and

five sports (football, track, ice hockey, basketball, and baseball). A 28th tree would be planted soon after to honor the office of the mayor of Newton.

The trees were a gift from William J. Conway, SJ, who helped set in place the one dedicated to St. Mary's Church, a large Jesuit parish in the North End where he was pastor. A former student (he left before graduating), Conway had over many years served on the College's all-Jesuit Board of Trustees and had helped to raise funds for development of the Chestnut Hill Campus. But while Conway's strong connection to Boston College accounts for the gift, his choice of lindens is more difficult to explain. Eastern North America is home to 15 native varieties of linden, a larger



Linden Lane as seen from St. Mary's lawn, fall 2004.

assortment than anywhere else in the world; but the littleleaf lindens at Boston College are not American trees. They are native to Northern Europe.

The late Boston College history professor Thomas H. O'Connor '49, MA '50, H'93, who served as University historian from 1999 to 2012, offered a possible University-linden connection in his last book (published online by Boston College's Linden Lane Press—naturally—in 2011). In *Boston College A to Z: The Spirit of the Heights*, O'Connor writes that the linden was thought to have protective powers in pagan times, an idea that found its way into a later belief, he said, that certain apparitions of the Blessed Mother had occurred "among the linden's branches."

Another possible link to Boston College—this time directly involving the Society of Jesus—emerges from medieval times in a Polish village called *Swieta Lipka*, which translates to "holy linden" and is home to a baroque church dedicated to a particular linden

tree. According to the church's website, a local man sentenced to death during the early 14th century prayed from his cell to the Virgin Mary. She appeared, gave him a chisel and block of linden wood, and instructed him to carve a statue of her. When he presented the statue to his executioners the next morning, they were

When the gundrop shape was dispensed with, the lindens grew quickly, developing lofty tangles of intersecting branches, and suckers—new growth from roots—that diverted nutrients and weakened the trees.

so impressed with its beauty that they set him free. The man, the story goes, placed the statue in a linden tree as a gesture of thanks, and the tree was soon credited with miraculous healings.

A chapel was constructed around the tree in 1320, but it was destroyed circa 1524 when Catholicism was banned in parts of

Germany. In the early 17th century, the church was reestablished and its care entrusted to the Jesuits, who maintain a presence there.

More prosaically, lindens—cold-hardy and densely leaved—had by the 16th century become a favored shade tree throughout Europe, and by 1750 the continent featured hundreds of linden-lined avenues, some of which, such as Unter den Linden, in Berlin, were widely admired. In the early 1900s, European lindens became a popular street tree in America as well, and Harvard's Arnold Arboretum published regular bulletins from around 1912 to 1925 that highlighted their ornamental value and surprising ability to thrive in New England.

Fr. Conway, who died in 1935, may have known the lore, or he may simply have made a sensible and fashionable choice. (Or some nursery may have had a supply of lindens it wanted to offload and offered the Boston priest favorable pricing.) Conway left no record as to his inspiration.

THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PARTICULAR LINDENS AND particular groups attached to Boston College was lost over the decades following the installation of the trees. In 1942, however, the trees took on a new symbolic identity, as representations of Boston College itself, in a popular poem by Thomas Heath, OP, '43. "Proud Refrain" was published in the *Stylus* in October 1942, while many Boston College alumni and students were serving in the military in distant places.

What are you dreaming, soldier,
What is it you see?
A tall gray Gothic tower,
And a linden tree.
You speak so sadly, soldier,
Sad and wistfully . . .
I cannot hear the tower bell
In the swirling sea.
What meaning has it, soldier,
A tower, bell, and tree?
Nothing, nothing—only once
It meant my life to me.

Today, Boston College's lindens carry less symbolic freight. Rather, they serve as a photographic frame for the eagle statue and Gasson tower, or a canopy for First Flight, a 2004 innovation that gathers newly arrived freshmen to hear the phrase "Go set the world aflame" proclaimed and then walk in a torch-lit procession to Conte Forum for their first convocation. Since 2005, seniors in caps and gowns have met for a Commencement-day breakfast beneath the lindens before marching to Alumni Stadium.

Over the years, the trees have undergone a significant transformation, shifting from gumdrop shapes at the outset (a pruning style that seems to have been maintained into the 1970s), to a look of natural abandon with wide, spreading crowns.

The consequences of that change have been serious. When the gumdrop shape was dispensed with, says Scott McCoy, Boston College's superintendent of grounds, the lindens began to grow quickly, developing lofty tangles of intersecting branches, and

suckers—new growth from roots—that diverted nutrients and weakened the trees.

In October 2012, Superstorm Sandy toppled one tree and cracked the roots of a second. Both lindens were removed along with two others that, following examination, were deemed a safety hazard.

A consulting firm hired by Boston College determined that three more lindens were at high risk for breaking, and these were removed in October 2013. Of the remaining trees, seven were classified as medium risk, and are regularly reviewed for structural soundness. The rest (now numbering 23) suffer from nothing more than old age and a related inability to carry much weight in their crowns. With care, they are expected to last another 25 years. That care will include pruning, but not soil additives, says McCoy. "They can't deal with that stress," he explains. "We just have to take care of their bones and weight."

Asked what tree he thought ought to replace the lindens, McCoy notes that "the linden is an old-fashioned New England plant. You don't see them around much anymore." He continues, "I'm not saying that maples would look foolish, but in the name of preserving history, lindens are the only thing that could go up." ■

Dent-de-lion

By Bailey Spencer '14

When her mother called she didn't answer,
standing at the stove, stirring. She didn't notice
the water was boiling until the kettle had
bubbled over and the steam licked her hands.
Her father thought she was going deaf. Her
mother thought she was in love. They didn't
know she spent her days in the field, ear to
ground, listening to the grass. She gave her head
to stamen, to lion's tooth, the wax and dark of
her inner ears fertile for seed. She was tired
of hollow space, wasted and stale. Let there be
apomixes. Let spores divide and swell, born
only of her body and egg. Each night she came
home with fists full of dandelions, drank her
progeny for tea.

Bailey Spencer teaches English in Heppenheim, Germany. She was a fellow at the Bucknell Seminar for Younger Poets following her graduation from Boston College.

WAIT WATCHER

By Jeri Zeder

A sociologist studies women with the cancer gene

Waiting for *Cancer to Come: Women's Experiences with Genetic Testing and Medical Decision Making for Breast and Ovarian Cancer* (University of Michigan Press, 2014) is sociology professor Sharlene Hesse-Biber's lay-accessible, qualitative study of women who test positive for BRCA1 or BRCA2—genetic mutations that place women “at high risk” for breast, ovarian, pancreatic, and other cancers. (The name derives from BRest CAncer.) The statistics are sobering: Hesse-Biber cites a 2009 study showing that, without medical intervention, individuals carrying the BRCA1 gene have only a 53 percent chance of reaching the age of 70. For BRCA2, the odds improve to 71 percent. Lacking both mutations, the likelihood is 84 percent.

The disclosure of a positive BRCA result is not the beginning of the story for most women, who, when they have the test, are not yet sick. The reasons for testing, the “testing experience,” and the “myriad ways women come to terms with their genetic news” (“I really want to take control,” one woman in the study says; “I don’t want to know, but I know,” says another) are where Hesse-Biber’s interests lie. While much research has gone on at the genetic level, and the actuarial, little work has been done, she says, to understand the personal, familial, and social ramifications for women who have pioneered (over the last 20 years or so) in having their DNA tested. The inquiry carries weight beyond her BRCA focus. The first company to market BRCA testing, Myriad Genetics, of Utah, now offers myRisk™ to test, it says, for “eight important cancers.” Hesse-Biber shares the view of some sociologists that Americans are becoming an “at-risk society,” ever more aware, through advances in science and technology, of our physical vulnerabilities, and ever more involved, as patients, in the medical decisions to address them.

Women with BRCA mutations typically see their choices as: proceeding with enhanced medical surveillance to detect, then treat cancer in its earliest stages; or preventive surgery (removal of breasts and ovaries while these organs are still healthy). On the surface, the numbers make a compelling case for preventive surgery: A double mastectomy can reduce a BRCA1-positive woman’s risk of breast cancer by 95 percent. A bilateral oophorectomy can

reduce the risk of ovarian cancer by 90 percent and the risk of breast cancer by 50 percent. Yet, if the goal is improved mortality, says Hesse-Biber, studies show that in the aggregate surgery is no better than surveillance.

Hesse-Biber interviewed 64 women, chosen from among respondents to postings she placed with online BRCA-support communities. All had tested positive for a BRCA-gene mutation save one, who underwent a mastectomy based on her family’s medical history. They ranged in age from 23 to 66. Demographically they were, she says, the women “who are generally tested for the BRCA mutation in the United States: white, middle to upper class, and educated.”

Hesse-Biber recorded upwards of two-hour telephone interviews with each woman, beginning with, “Can you tell me how you came to be tested for BRCA mutation, and what happened after that?” All but eight of the women also took an online survey, providing demographic information; personal and family histories of cancer; and details about medical decisions.

In a book that also examines the history of genetic testing and its rapid, direct-to-consumer commercialization (one interviewee saw an ad for testing on the subway: “Are you ready to fight disease before it starts?”), Hesse-Biber gives voice to women who sought “genetic knowledge.” They recount their struggles toward a readiness to be tested. The anniversary of her mother’s death became the day one woman got tested. The age at which another went forward with preventive surgery matched the age of her mother when

she died. “That kind of thinking is not at all what you would read in the decision-making literature about how women make medical decisions,” Hesse-Biber says. Also in the book’s pages, women describe the feeling of “waiting for cancer to come.” They worry about their sisters and daughters. They make jokes.

Hesse-Biber lost her younger sister to breast cancer. The disease has struck her mother, her older sister, and herself, though all tested negative for BRCA mutations. “I have researched a variety of topics related to women’s lives and health, including women and work, the intersection of gender and race, and body image and eating disorders,” she writes in her epilogue. “This study found me.” ■





Kelly, at Striking Beauties gym in North Attleboro, Massachusetts, with two of her fighters.

Saved by the bell

By Thomas Cooper

Charity fight promoter Julie Kelly '01

On the evening of October 2, 2014, Julie Kelly stood on a balcony inside the Royale nightclub in Boston's Theater District. Below her, in the "ballroom," two women in pink boxing trunks, singlets, 12-ounce gloves (red or blue), and protective headgear faced off in a portable boxing ring. Cheered on by a crowd of some 900 men and women, most under 40, who had paid \$75 to attend, the fighters—one a school teacher by day, the other a realtor—slugged it out in a torrent of blows. The realtor (blue gloves) won on points, awarded by five USA Boxing judges.

"Belles of the Brawl 2"—a 10-fight card—was a classic production of Haymakers for Hope (H4H), a nonprofit launched by Kelly and a friend, Andrew Myerson, in 2010 to raise money for cancer research. The two met in fall 2009 at a New York City gym where Kelly was training to defend her title—successfully—in the 132-pound division of the New York Golden Gloves competition. Kelly took up competitive boxing in 2002 to get in shape; she'd been declared cancer-free that year after chemotherapy and radiation treatment for Hodgkin's lymphoma. At the time, the former art history major was working in digital marketing for Hearst television. Now her job is to oversee H4H

fighters' four months of preparations, from admission (when she matches applicants by age, weight, and athletic experience) to weigh-in on fight night. (Myerson, who worked at Goldman Sachs before cofounding H4H, handles the finances.) Kelly is on the road six days of most weeks, meeting with each boxer at least once every 10 days at his or her gym to review conditioning and skills, and adjusting the pairings to yield bouts that can go the distance (three two-minute rounds).

To participate, boxers must raise \$4,000 for a designated charity such as the Jimmy Fund or Memorial Sloan Kettering. The volunteers often find soliciting pledges more daunting than fighting, Kelly says, so she advises on targets and tactics. For the three events H4H sponsored last year, Kelly managed 76 fighters. She and her electrical engineer husband also welcomed a baby girl, Calin Kay, in November.

Since 2011, H4H has held nine events, in Manhattan and Boston. Two featured women-only cards, the others a mix of men's and women's fights. Between money brought in by the fighters and income from ticket sales, sponsorships, ringside raffles and auctions, and T-shirts, the organization has raised more than \$3 million, with 70 percent going to charities. ■

BOSTON COLLEGE
LIGHT·the·WORLD
150TH ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN



For every **STUDENT**. For every **PROFESSOR**.

Inspire teaching and research excellence at the Heights.

WWW.BC.EDU/LTW

FOR BC